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Old English Drama

STUDENTS' FACSIMILE EDITION

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THE

Misfortunes of Arthur

By Thomas Hughes and Others

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By Thomas Hughes and Others

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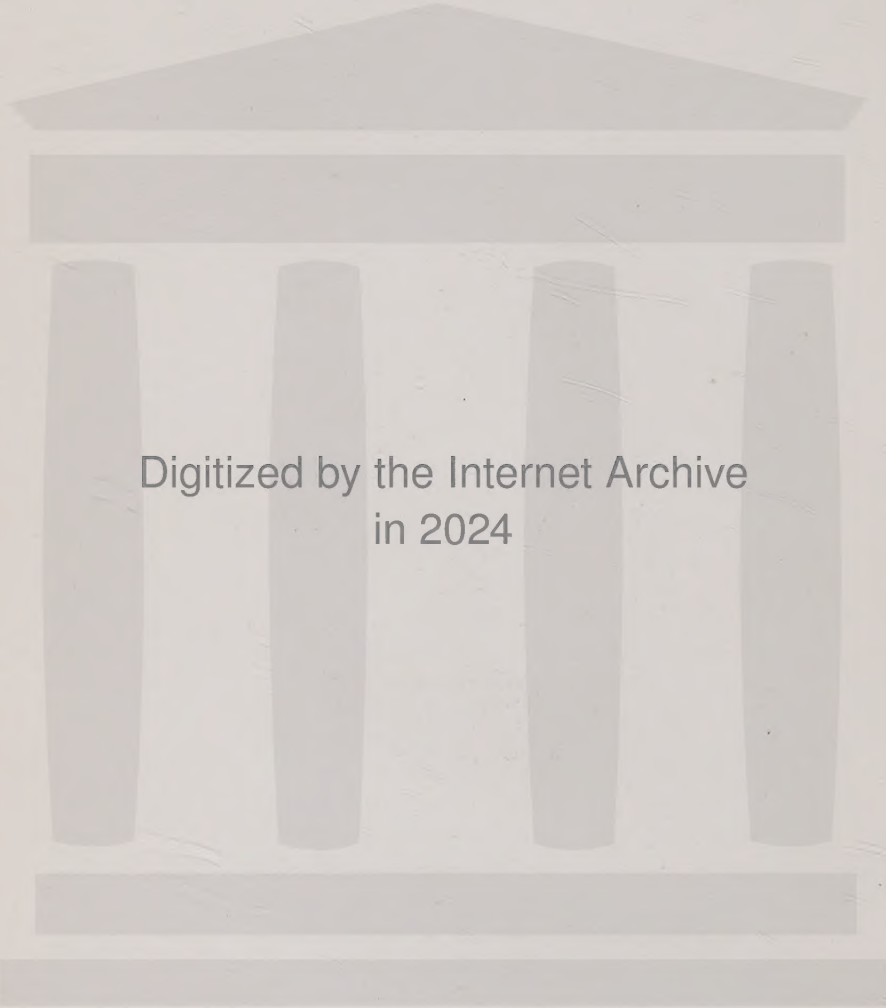


H. Davis Engraver '85

CERTAINE DE-
u. es and shewes presented to
her MAIESTIE by the Gentlemen of
Grays-Inne at her Highnesse Court in
Greenwich, *the twenty eighth day of*
Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her
MAIESTIES most happy
Raigne.



AT LONDON
Printed by Robert Robinson.
1587.



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AN INTRODVCTI-

on penned by Nicholas Trotte

*Gentleman one of the Society of Grayes-Inne; which
was pronounced in manner following. viz. Three*

*Muses came vpon the Stage appavelled accordingly
bringing five Gentlemen Students with them attyred*

in their vsuall garments, whom one of the Muses presen-

ted to her MAIESTIE as Captiues; the cause

*whereof she deliuered by speech
as followeth.*

OF Conquest (gratious Queene) the signs & fruits,

Atchiu'd gainst such, as wrongfully withheld

The service by choice wits to *Muses* due;

In humbliest wise, these Captiues we present.

And least your highnes might suspect the gift

As spoile of Warre, that Iustice might impeach;

Heare and discerne how iust our quarrell was

Auowed (as you see) by good successe.

A Dame there is, whom men *Astrea* terme,

Shee that pronounceth Oracles of Lawes,

Who to prepare fit seruants for her traine

As by Commission takes vp flowering wits,

Whom first she schooleth to forget and scorne

The noble skils of language and of Arts,

The wisdom, which discourse of stories teach,

The ornaments which various knowledge yeelds;

But Poesie she hath in most disdain,

And Marshals it next Follyes scorned place.

Then, when she hath these worthy Prints defac'd

Out of the mindes that can endure her hand,

What doth she then supplie in steede of these?

Forsooth some olde reports of altered lawes,

Clamors of Courts, and caills vpon words,

Grounds

Grounds without ground, supported by conceit,
 And reasons of more subtiltie then sense,
 What shall I say of Moote points straunge, and doubt
 Still argued but neuer yet agreed?
 And shee, that doth deride the Poets lawe,
 Because he must his words in order place,
 Forgets her formes of pleading more precise,
 More bound to words then is the Poets lore:
 And for these fine conceits she fitly chose,
 A tongue that Barbarisme it selfe doth vse.
 We noting all these wrongs did long expect
 There hard condition would haue made them wise,
 To offer vs their seruise plac'd so ill;
 But finding them addicted to their choyce,
 And specially desirous to present
 Your Maestie with fruits of Prouince newe,
 Now did resolute to double force and skill,
 And found and vsde the vantage of the time,
 Surprised their fort, and tooke them Captiues all.
 So now submisse, as to their state belongs
 They gladly yeelde their homage long withdrawne,
 And Poetry which they did most contemne
 They glory now her fauours for to weare.
 My sisters laught to see them take the penne,
 And lose their wits all in vnwoonted walkes.
 But to your highnes that delight we leaue,
 To see these Poets newe their Stile aduaunce,
 Such as they are, or naught or litle worth,
 Deigne to accept, and therewith we beseech,
 That nouelty giue price to worthlesse things.

¶ Vnto this speech one of the Gentlemen answered as followeth.

GOOD Ladies vnacquaint with cunning reach,
 And easily led to glory in your powre,
 Heare now abasht our late dissembled mindes.

Not

Not now the first time as your selues best knowe.
Ye Muses sought our seruice to commaund,
Oft haue ye wandred from Pernaſſus hill,
And ſhewed your ſelues with ſweet & tempting grace,
But yet returnd your traine encreaſde with ſewe,
This reſolution doth continue ſtill.
Vnto *Aſtreas* name we honour beare,
Whoſe ſound perfections we doe more admire,
Then all the vanted ſtore of Muses guiſts.
Let this be one (which laſt you put in vre,
In well deprauing that deſerueth praiſe)
No eloquence, diſguiſing reaſons ſhape,
Nor Poetrie, each vaine affections nurce,
No various hiſtorie that doth leade the minde
Abroad to auncient tales from inſtant uſe,
Nor theſe, nor other moe, too long to note,
Can winne *Aſtreas* ſeruants to remoue
Their ſeruice, once deuote to better things.
They with attentiu mindes and ſerious wits,
Reuolue records of deepe Iudiciall Acts,
They waigh with ſteaddy and indifferent hand
Each word of lawe, each circumſtance of right,
They hold the grounds which time & uſe hath ſooth'd
(Though ſhallow ſenſe conceiue them as conceits)
Preſumptuous ſenſe, whoſe ignorance dare iudge
Of things remou'd by reaſon from her reach.
One doubt in mootes by argument encreaſc'd
Cleares many doubts, experience doth obiect.
The language ſhe firſt choſe, and ſtill retaines,
Exhibites naked truth in apteſt termes.
Our Induſtrie maintaineth vnimpeach't
Prerogatiue of Prince, reſpect to Peeres,
The Commons libertie, and each mans right:
Suppreſſeth mutin force, and practicke fraude.

Things,

Things that for worth our studious care deserue.
Yet neuer did we banish nor reiect
Those ornaments of knowledge nor of tounge.
That slander enuious ignorance did raise.
With Muses still we entercourse allowe,
T'enrich our state with all there forreine freight:
But neuer homage nor acknowledgement
Such as of Subiects alleageance doth require.
Now heere the cause of your late Conquest wonne
We had discovered your intent to be
(And sure ye, Ladies are not secrete all
Speach and not silence is the Muses grace)
We well perceiu'd (I say) your minde to be
T'employ such prisoners, as themselues did yeeld
To serue a Queene, for whom her purest gold
Nature rekind, that she might therein sette
Both priuate and imperiall vertues all.
Thus (Soueraigne Lady of our lawes and vs)
Zeale may transforme vs into any shape.
We, which with trembling hand the penne did guide
Neuer well please all for desire to please
For still your rare perfections did occurre
VVhich are admir'd of Muses and of men
Oh with howe steddie hand and heart assur'd
Should we take vp the warlicke Lance or Sword
VVith minde resolu'd to spend our loyall blood
Your least commaund with speede to execute.
O that before our time the fleeting shippe,
Ne'r wandred had in watery wildernes,
That we might first that venture vndertake
In strange attempt t'approue our loyall hearts.
Be it Souldiers, Seamen, Poets, or what els.
In seruice once inioynd, to ready mindes
Our want of vse should our deuoyer encrease.

Now

Now since in steade of art we bring but zeale,
In steade of prayse we humbly pardon craue.
The matter which we purpose to present,
Since streights of time our liberty controules
In tragike note the plagues of vice recounts.
How sutes a Tragedie for such a time?
Thus, For that since your sacred Maiestie
In gracious hands the regall Scepter held
All Tragedies are fled from State, to stage.

Nicholas Trotte.

The misfortunes of Arthur (V-

*ther Pendragons Sonne) reduced into Tragicall notes
by THOMAS HVGHES one of the societie of
Grayes-Inne. And here set downe as it past from under
his handes and as it was presented, excepting certaine
wordes and lines, where some of the Actors either helped
their memories by brief omission: or fitted their acting by
some alteration. With a note in the ends, of such spea-
ches as were penned by others in lue of some of these
hereafter following.*

The argument of the Tragedie.



A banquet made by *Vther Pendragon* for the solemnising of his conquest against the *Saxons*, he fell inamour'd with *Igernas* wife to *Gorlois* Duke of *Cornwell*. Who perceiuing the Kings passion, departed with his wife and prepared warres at *Cornwell*, where also in a strong holde beyond him hee placed her. Then the King lent an armye to suppress him, but waxing impatient of his desire to *Igernas*, transformed himselfe by *Merlin* his cunning, into the likenesse of *Gorlois*. And after his acceptance with *Igernas* he returned to his siege, where he slew *Gorlois*. *Igernas* was deliuered of *Arthur* and *Anne* twins of the same birth. *Vther Pendragon* 25. yeres after pursuing the *Saxons* was by them poisoned. *Arthur* delighted in his sister *Annoy*, who made him father of *Mordred*. Seventeene yeres after *Lucius Tiberius* of *Rome* demanded a tribute due by the conquest of *Cesar*. *Arthur* gathered the powers of 13. Kinges besides his owne, and leauing his Queene *Gueneuora* in the tuition of *Mordred*, to whome likewise he committed the kingdome in his absence, arrived at *France*, where after 9. yeres warres, he sent the flaine bodie of *Tiberius* vnto *Rome* for the tribute. During this absence *Mordred* grew ambitious, for the effecting whereof he made loue to *Gueneuora*, who gave care vnto him. Then by the assistance of *Gilla* a *British* Lord hee vsurped, and for maintenance enter-tayned with large promises, the *Saxons*, *Irish*, *Pictes*, & *Normands*. *Gueneuora* hearing that *Arthur* was already embarked for returne, through dispaire purposing diuersly, sometimes to kill her husband, sometimes to kill her selfe, at last resolu'd to enter into religion. *Arthur* at his landing was resisted on the fironde of *Douers*, where he put *Mordred* to flight. The last fiede was fought at *Cornwell*, where after the death of one hundred and twentie thousand souldiers on either side 20; *Mordred* receiued his death, and *Arthur* his deadly wound.

The Argument and manner of the first dumbé shew.

Sounding the musicke, there rose three furies from vnder the stage apparelled according to snakes and flames about their blacke haire and garments. The first with a Snake in the right hande and a cup of wine with a Snake atwart the cup in the left hand. The second with a firebrand in the right hande, and a Cupid in the left. The third with a whippe in the right hande and a Pegasus in the left. Whiles they went masking about the stage, there came from another place three Nuns which walked by them selues. Then after a full sight giuen to the beholders, they all parted, the furies to *Mordreds* house, the Nuns to the Cloister. By the first furie with the Snake and Cup was signified the Banquet of *Vther Pendragon*, and afterward his death which ensued by poisoned cup. The second furie with her firebrande & Cupid represented *Vthers* vnlawfull heate and loue conceyued at the banquet, which neuer ceased in his posteritie. By the third with her whip and Pegasus was prefigured the crueltie and ambition which thence ensued and continued to the effecting of this tragidie. By the Nuns was signified the remorse and dispaire of *Gueneuora*, that wanting other hope sought a Nunrie for her refuge. After their departure, the furies which represented the Churche sought their place.



The argument of the first Act.

- 1 IN the first scene the spirit of **Gozlois** Duke of Cornwall, the man first & most wronged in this historie being dispoild both of Wife, Dukedome and life craueth reuenge for these iniuries, denouncing the whole misfortune insuing.
- 2 In the second scene, **Gueneuoza** hearing that **Arthur** was on Seas returning, desperately manaceth his death, from which intent she is dissuaded by **frontia**, a Lady of her Court & priuie to her secretes.
- 3 In the third sceue **Gueneuoza** perplexedly mindeth her owne death, whence being dissuaded by her sister she resoluech to enter into Religion.
- 4 In the fourth scene **Mordred** goeth about to perswade **Gueneuoza** to persist in her loue, but missech thereof: And then is exhorted by **Conan** (a noble mā of **Byptain**) to reconcile himselfe to his Father at his comming, but refuseth so to doe and resoluech to keepe him from landing by battaile.

The names of the speakers.

Gozlois Duke of Cornwall's ghost.
Gueneuoza the Queene.
frontia a Lady of her trayne.
Angbarad sister to the Queene.
Mordred the Usurper.
Conan a faithfull counsellor.
Pumtius of Arthurs landing.
The Herald from Arthur.
Gawain King of Albante.
Gilla: a Byttishe Earle.
Gillamo: King of Ireland.

Cheldrich Duke of Saronie.
The Loide of the Idices.
Arthur King of great Byptain.
Cador: Duke of Cornwall.
Hoel King of little Brittain.
The Herald from **Mordred**.
Alschillus King of Denmarke.
The King of **Norwaye**.
A number of Souldiers.
Pumtius of the last battell.
Gildas a noble man of Byptain.

CHORVS.



THE FIRST ACT

and first scene.

Gorlois.

GOR L: Since thus through channells blacke of Limbo lake,

And deepe infernall floude of Stygian pool,
The gaskly Caron's boate transported backe
Thy ghout, from Plute's pities and glouming shades,
To former light once lost by Destinies doome:
Where pouldre Pendragon hyspde with shamefull lust,
Disposhe thee erst of wife, of lande, and life:
Poole (Gorlois) worke thy wish, cast here thy gaule,
Giutte on reuenge: thy wrath abboirs delays.

What though (besides Pendragons poplond end)
The vile reproch he wrought thee by thy phere,
Through deepe increate of crimes alike is plagude?
And that the shame thou suffredst for his lusts,
Reboulderh backe, and sitelerh in his stocke?
Pet is not mischiefes measure all fulfide,
For to wake sufficient wrought: Thy murdered corse
And Duke dome rest, for heauier vengeance cries.

Come therefore blowmes of settled mischiefes roote,
Come ech thing else, what furie can inuent,
Mitreake all at once, infect the ayre with plagues,
Till bad to worse, till worse to worst be turne.
Let mischiefes know no meane, nor plagues an end.
Let thy offsprings sinne excede the former stocke:
Let none haue time to hate his former fault,
But still with fresh supplie let punisht crime
Increase, till tyme it make a complet sinne.

Goe to: some fact, which no age shall allowe,
Doe yet conceale: some fact must needes be darde,
That for the horro: great and outrage fell
Thereof, may well beseeine Pendragons broode.
And first, whiles Arthurs naules hometowards flott
Triumphantly bedeckt with Romaine spoiles;
Let Guenouer expresse what franticke moodes
Distract a wife, when wronging wedlockes rights,
Both sonde and sell, she loues and loathes at once.
Let deepe dispaire pursue, till loathing life
Her hatefull heade in cowe and cloister lurge.

Let traitterous Mordred keepe his fire from hoare.
Let Brytaine rest a pray for foireine powers,
Let sworde and fire still fedde with mutuall strife
Tourney all the Kings to ghaastes, let ciuill warres
And discorde dwell till all the realme be toyme.

Euen in that soyle whereof my selfe was Duke,
Where first my spowse Igerne brake her vowe,
Where this vngacious offspring was begotte,
In Cornwell, there, let Mordreds death declare,

ARTHV R.

Let Arthurs fatall wounde betmay the wrong,
The murder vile, the rape of wife and weale,
Wherewith their live incens both Gods and man:
Thus, thus Pendragons see De so sowne and reapte,
Thus curst tynps, fill borne, and worse consum'd,
Shall render lust reuenge for parents crimes,
And penance due t' asswadge my swelling wrath.
The whites D Calhop a gempright signe,
Most sacred light, and sweete Caelstiall starre,
This Clymar's ioy, plac'd in imperiall throne
With fragrant Oliue branche portending peace:
And whosoe'r besides ye heauenly pow'rs
(Her stately trapne with influence diuine,
And milde aspect all prone to Brytaine: good)
Forsee what present plagues doe threaten this Iffe:
Preuent not this my weake. For you their rest
A happier age a thousand yeares to come:
An age for peace, religion, wealth, and ease,
When all the world shall wonder at your blisse:
That, that is yours. Leauē this to Gorlois ghost.
And see where com's one engine of my hate.
With moods and manners fit for my reuenge.

Exit.

The second scene.

Gnencuora, Fronia.

GVEN. **A**ND dares he after nine yeares space returne,
And see her face, whom he so long dishaind?
Was I then chose and wedded for his state,
To looke and gape for his retireless layles,
Dust backe, and sitting spread to euery winde?
O wrong content with no reuenge: seeke out
Undared plagues, teach Mordred how to rage.
Attempt some bloodie, dreadfull, irkesome fact,
And such as Mordred would were rather his.
Why stayest? it must be done: let bridle goe,
Frame out some trap beyonde all vulgar guile,
Beyonde Medea's wiles: attempt some fact,
That any wight untwilde of her selfe,
That any spouse unfaithfull to her phere,
Durst euer attempt in most dishatre of weale.
Spare no reuenge, b't poyson, knyfe, or fire.

FRON. Good Badaine, temper these outrageous moods,
And let not will vsurpe, where wit should rule.

GVEN. The wrath, that breatheth blode, doth loath to lurke.
That reason most with holdes, rage wynges perforce.
I am dishainde: so will I not be long:
That very houre, that he shall first arrive,
Shall be the last, that shall asoyde him life.

Though, neither seas, nor lands, nor warres abroad
Suffice

Sufficed for thy foyle: yet shalt thou finde
 Farre twofold at home: Thy deepe displeased spotts.
 What e'r thou hast lubbide in all thy stay,
 This hand shall now subdue: then stay thy fill.
 What's this: my mind recoyls, and ykes these threats:
 Anger delays, my griefe gynneth to allwaie,
 My furie faintes, and sacred wedlockes faith
 Presents it selfe. (Ally thurst thou fearefull wrath)
 Add coales a freshe, preserve me to this venge.
 At lest e'yle thy selfe to realmes unknowne,
 And keale his wealth to helpe thy banisht state,
 For flight is best. O bafe and hartlesse feare.
 Theft: e'yle: flight: all these may Fortune sende
 Unlought: but thee beleeues more high reuenge.
 Come spitefull fiends, come heapes of furies fell,
 Not one, by one, but all at once: my brest
 Raues not inough: it likes me to be hidde
 With greater monsters yet. My hart doth throbbe:
 My liuer boyles: some what my minde portendes,
 Uncertayne what: but whatsoever, it's huge,
 So it excede, be what it will: it's well.
 Omit no plague, and none will be inough.
 Wrong cannot be reueng'd, but by excessse.

FRON. O spare this heate: you yelde too much to rage,
 Pare too vniust: is there no meane in wrong?

GVEN. Wrong claymes a meane, when first you offer wronge,
 The meane is vaine, when wrong is in reuenge.
 Great harmes cannot be hidde, the griefe is small,
 That can receaue aduise, or ruse it selfe.

FRON. Hatred concealde doth often happe to hurte,
 But once profess, it oftner failes reuenge.
 How better tho, wert to repressle your yre?
 A Ladies best reuenge is to forgiue.

GVEN. What meane is in your hate? how much loe'r
 You can inuent, or dare: so much you hate.
 And would you knowe what meane there is in hate?

Call loue to minde, and see what meane is there.
 My loue, redoubled loue, and constant faith
 Engaged vnto Mordred workes so deepe:
 That both my hart and marrow quite be burnt,
 And synewes dyed with force of boundlesse flames,
 Desire to toy him still, toiments my mynde:
 Feare of his want doth add a double griefe.

FRON. Loe here the loue, that stirres this meanelesse hate,
 Elshew it farre: such loue impugneth the lawes.

GVEN. Unlawfull loue doth like, when lawfull lothes.

FRON. And is your loue of hus bande quite extinct?

GVEN. The greater flame must needs delay the lesse.

Besides, his sore reuenge I greatly feare.

FRON. How can you then attempt a fresh offence?

GVEN. Who can appoint a sign to her offence?

- FRON. But here the greatnesse of the fact should moue.
 GVEN. The greater it, the fitter for my grieve:
 FRON. To kill your spouse? GVEN. A stranger, and a foe.
 FRON. Your ledge and king? GVEN. He wants both Realme and Crowne.
 FRON. Nature affordes not to your seere such strength.
 GVEN. Loue, anguish, wrath, will soone afforde inough.
 FRON. What rage is this? GVEN. Such as himselfe shall rue.
 FRON. Whom Gods doe presse inough, will you annoy?
 GVEN. Whom Gods doe presse, they bende: whom man annoyes,
 He breakes. FRON. Your grieve is more then his desertes:
 Ech fault requires an equall hate: be not seuerer,
 Where crimes be light: as you haue felt, so Greene.
 GVEN. And seemes it light to want him nine yeare space?
 Then to be spoild of one I hold more deare?
 Thinke all to much, & it ne'r so lust, that feedes
 Continuall grieve: the lasting woe is worst.
 FRON. Yet let your highnesse shun these desperate moodes,
 Cast of this rage, and sell disposed minde.
 Put not shame quite to flight, haue some regard
 Both of your sex, and future fame of life.
 Use no such cruell thoughts, as farre exceede
 A manly minde, much more a womans hart.
 GVEN. Well, shame is not so quite exilde, but that
 I can, and will respect your sage aduise.
 Your Counsell I accept, giue leaue a while,
 Till fiery wrath may stoke, and rage relent.

Exit FRON.

The third scene.

Gueneuora. Angharat.

- GVEN. **T**HOU, that for his rage wilt not be rui'de,
 Must be restrain'd: fame shall receiue no soile.
 Let Arthur liue, whereof to make him sure,
 My selfe will dye, and so prevent his harmes.
 Why stayest thou thus amaze'd? slouthfull wrath?
 Mischiefe is meant, dispatch it on thy selfe.
 ANGH. Yet bea'st not yett appeale from former rage
 Hath chaung'de her wrath, which wanting meanes to worke
 An others woe, (for such is furies wont),
 Seekes out his owne, and rages vpon it selfe.
 Allwaie (alas) that ouer feruent ire,
 Throughe to much anger, you offend too much;
 Thereby the rather you deserue to liue,
 For seeming worthy in your selfe to dye.
 GVEN. Death is decreed: what kinde of death, I doubt:
 Whether to d'ound, or fill by his breath.
 On seying blow, to dye with dint of knife.
 All hope of prosperous day is gone, my fame,
 My faith, my spouse: no god is left vnlost:
 My selfe am left, they'g left both seas and sands,

And

- And sword, and fire, and chaines, and choice of harmes.
 A gnawing easelisse griefe. Who now can heale
 My maymed minde: it must be heald e by death.
- ANGH. No mischief must be done, whiles I be by,
 Or if there must, there must be more then one.
 If death it be you seeke, I seeke, it too:
 Alone you may not die, with me you may.
- GVEN. They, that will daue th' unwilling to their death,
 Or frustrate death in those, that faine would die,
 Offend alike. They spoile, that bootelesse spare.
- ANGH. But will my teares and mournings moue you nought?
- GVEN. Then is it best to die, when friends doe mourne.
- ANGH. Ech where is death: that, fates haue well ordainde,
 That ech man may bereaue himselfe of life,
 But none of death: death is so sure a downe:
 A thousand wayes doe guide vs to our graues.
 Who then can euer come too late to that,
 Whence, when h' is come, he neuer can returne?
 Or what auailles to hasten on our ends,
 And long for that, which destines haue twyned?
 Looke backe in time, to late is to repent,
 When furious rage hath once cut of the choice.
- GVEN. Death is an end of paine, no paine it selfe.
 If't meete a plague, for such excessive wrong,
 Should be so short: Soould one stroke and were all?
 And wouldst thou dye? Well: that contents the lawes,
 What then for Arthurs ire? What for thy fame,
 Which thou hast stainde? What for thy stocke thou shamst?
 Not death, nor life alone can glue a full
 Revenge: to yne both in one. Die: and yet liue.
 Where paine may not be oft, let it be long.
 Seeke out some lingering death, whereby, thy coste
 May neither touch the dead, nor toy the quicke.
 Dye: but no common death: passe Natures boundes.
- ANGH. Set plaintes aside, despaire yelds no reliefe.
 The more you search a wounde, the more it stings.
- GVEN. When guiltie mindes torment them selues, they heale:
 Whiles woundes be cur'd, griefe is a salve for griefe.
- ANGH. Griefe is no iust extremer of our deedes:
 What so hath yet beene done, proceedes from chaunce.
- GVEN. The minde, and not the chaunce, doth make th' unchaste,
- ANGH. Then is your fault from Fate, you rest excuse:
 None can be deem'd faultie for her Fate.
- GVEN. No Fate, but manners fayle, when we offende.
 Impute mishaps to Fates, to manners faulces.
- ANGH. Loue is an error, that may blinde the best.
- GVEN. A mightie error oft hath seemde a sinne.
 By death is vowed, and death must needes take place.
 But such a death, as standes with iust remorse;
 Death, to the world, and to her slipperie toyes:
 A full deuorce from all this Courtly pompe.

Where

ARTHUR

Where dayly penance Done for each offence,
 May render due reuenge for euery wrong.
 Which to accomplysh: pray my dearest friends,
 That they forth with attyde in saddest guise,
 Conduct me to the Cloister next hereby,
 There to professe, and to renounce the world.
 Alas! What chaunge were that, from kingly rootes
 To Cloistered celles: To liue, and dye at once?
 To want your stately troupes, your friends and kinner?
 To shun the shewes and sightes of stately Court.
 To see in soot aliue, your Countreies death?
 Psea, what so'er euen Death it selfe withdraues
 From any els, that lfe with draues from you.
 Yet since your highnes is so fully bent,
 I will obey, the whiles allwaie your griefe

Exit

The fourth scene.

Mordred. Gueneuora. Conan.

MORD. **T**he house which earst I alwaies feared most,
 The certaine ruine of my desperate state,
 Is happened now: why turnst thou (minde) thy backe?
 Why at the first assault dost thou recoile?
 Trust to't: the angry heauens contriue some spight,
 And dreadfull doome, to augment thy curst hap.
 Oppose to ech reuenge thy guiltie heade,
 And shun no paine nor plague fit for thy fact.
 What shouldst thou feare, that lett not what to hope?
 No danger's left before, all's at thy backe.
 He safely stands, that standes beyond his harmes.
 Thine (death) is all, that East, or West can see,
 For thee we tme, our conning is not long,
 Spare vs, but whiles we may prepare our graues,
 Though thou wert slowe, we hasten of our selues.
 The houre that gaue, did also take our liues:
 No sower men, then mortall were we boine.
 I see mine end drawes on, I feele my plagues.
 No plague for one ill boine, to dye as ill.
 MORD. **Q**ueene my sweete associate in this plunge,
 And desperate plight, behold, the time is come,
 That either iustifies our former faultes,
 Or shortly lets vs free from euery feare.
 GVEN. **M**y feare is past, and wedlock loue hath woonne.
 Retire we thither yet, whence first we ought
 Not to haue fled. Call backe chaste faith againe.
 The way, that leads to god, is ne'r to late:
 Who so repentes, is guiltlesse of his crimes.
 MORD. **W**hat meanes this course? Is Arthurs wedlocke safe?
 Or can he loue, that hath iust cause to hate?
 What nothing els were to be feared:

A R T H U R.

- Is most apparant, that he hates at home,
 What e'r he be, whole familie straves abroad?
 Thinke then, our loue is not vnknewen to him;
 Whereof what patience can be safely hope?
 No: loue, nor souerainetie can beare a peere.
- GVEN. Thy dost thou still fire up my flames delayd?
 His straves and errors must not moue my minde.
 A law for priuate men bindes not the King.
 What, that I ought not to condemne my liedge,
 Nor can, thus guiltie to myne owne offence?
 Where both haue done amisse, both will relent.
 He will forgine, that needes must be forgiven.
- MORD. A likely thing; your faults must make you friends;
 What lets you both at odds, must ioine you both;
 Thinke well he casts already for reuenge,
 And how to plague vs both. I know his law,
 A Iudge seuer to vs, milde to himselfe.
 What then auails you to returne to late,
 When you haue past to farre? Doute of vaine hopes.
- GVEN. The further past, the more this fault is yours:
 It seru'd your turne, & lurpe your fathers Crowne.
 His is the crime, whom crime stands most in steede.
- MORD. They, that conspire in faults offend a like;
 Crime makes them equall, whom it iointly stains.
 If for my sake you then pertooke my guilt,
 You cannot guiltlesse seeme, the crime was ioint.
- GVEN. Well should we seeme most guiltlesse vnto thee,
 What e'r he be, that's guiltie for thy sake.
 The remnant of that sober minde, which thou
 Hadst here tofore nere vanquish't, yet resist's.
 Suppress't for shame that impious mouth so taught,
 And to much I kild fabule the wedded bed.
 Look backe to former Fates: Troy still had stood,
 Had not her Iuince made light of wedlocks loze.
 The vice, that threw downe Troy, doth threat thy Throne:
 Take heed; here Mordred stands, whence Paris fell. Exit.
- CONA. Since that your highnes knowes for certaine truth
 That power your sire prepares to claime his right:
 It needely now concernes you to resolu
 In humblest sort to reconcile your selfe
 Gainst his returne: MORD. will warre, CONA. that lies in chauncer.
- MORD. I haue as great a share in chaunce, as he.
- CONA. His waies be blinde, that maketh chauncer his guide.
- MORD. Whose refuge lies in Chance, what dares he not?
- CONA. Warres were a crime farre worse then all the rest.
- MORD. The safest passage is from bad to worse.
- CONA. That were to passe too farre, and put no meane.
- MORD. He is a foole, that puts a meane in crimes.
- CONA. But sword and fire would cause a common wound.
- MORD. So sword and fire will often seare the soare.

- CONA. Extremest times must not be bled first.
 MORD. In desperate times, the headlong way is best.
 CONA. I haue many foes. MORD. No more then saythfull friends.
 CONA. Trust to't, their faith will faint, where Fortune failes.
 There many men pretend a loue to one,
 Whose power may doe what good, and harme he will;
 'Tis hard to say, which be his faithfull friends.
 Dame flatterie fliteth oft: she loues and hates
 With time, a present friend an absent foe.
 But yet y^ell hope the best: Then then y^ell see
 The worst. Feares follow hopes, as fumes doe flames.
 Mischiefe is sometimes safe: but ne'r secure:
 The wrongfull Scepter's held with trembling hand.
 MORD. Whose rule wants right, his safety's in his Sword.
 For Sword and Scepter comes to Kings at once.
 CONA. The Kingliest point is to affect but right,
 MORD. Meake is the Scepters hold, that seeks but right,
 The care whereof hath danger'd many Crownes.
 As much as water differeth from the fire,
 So much man's profit farres from what is iust.
 A free recourse to wrong doth oft secure
 The doubtfull seate, and plucks doone many a foe.
 The Sword must seldome cease: a Soueraignes hand
 Is scantily safe, but whiles it limites. Let him
 Urpe no Crowne, that likes a guiltles life:
 Aspiring power and Justice field agree.
 He alwaies feares, that shames to offer wrong.
 CONA. What sonne would vse such wrong against his fire?
 MORD. Come sonne, come fire, I first preferre my selfe.
 And since a wrong must be, then it excels,
 When 't is to gaine a Crowne. I hate a peere,
 I loath, I yke, I doe detest a head.
 B't Nature, be it Reason, be it Pride,
 I loue to rule: my minde nor with, nor by,
 Nor after any claimes, but chiefe and first.
 CONA. Yet thinke what fame and grieuous hurts would runne
 Of such disloyall and vniust attempts.
 MORD. Fame goe's not with our Ghosts, the senselesse soule
 Once gone, neglects what vulgar brute reports.
 She is both light and vaine. CONAN. She noteth though.
 She seareth States. CONAN. She carpeth ne'r the lesse.
 MORD. She's soone suppress. CONAN. As soone the springs againe,
 MORD. Youngs are untamde: and Fame is Chutes Dogge,
 That absent barks, and present fawnes as fast.
 It fearing dares, and yet hat's neuer done,
 But dares: though Death redeeme vs from all foes
 Besides, yet Death redeemes vs not from Youngs.
 For Arthur land, the Sea shall bluch with blood.
 And all the Stronds with smoaking laughters reeke.
 Pots (Wars) protect me in my first attempt.
 If Mordred scape, this Realme shall want no warres.

Exeunt,

CHORVS.

ARTHUR

CHORVS.

- 1 **S**EE here the Duke of Corlois Cornish Duke,
And deepe desire to shake his Soueraignes Throne:
Whos foule his fall, how bitter his rebuke,
Whiles wife, and weale, and life, and all be gone:
He now in hell tormented wants that good:
Lo, to the end of trayterous bones and blood.
- 2 **P**endragon hysbe with flames of filthy fires,
By Merlins mistis inioyde Igenas bed,
Next spoiled Corlois doubting his desires,
Then was himselfe through force of poyson sped.
Altho sorres in sinne, in sinne shall reape his paine:
The Doome is sworne: Death guerdon's death againe.
- 3 **W**hiles Arthur warres abroad and reapes renowne,
Gueneuora pferres his sonnes desire.
And trayterous Mordred still usurpes the Crowne,
Affording fuell to her que uchieffe fire.
But Death's too good, and life too sweete for theale,
That wanting both, should tast of neither's eale.
- 4 **I**n Rome the gapping gulfe would not decreale,
Till Curtius coile had clos'd her yawning lawes:
In Theb's the Rotte and Murdreine would not cease,
Till Laius byrde had paid for breach of lawes:
In Brytain warres and discords will not stent:
Till Vber's line and offspring quite be spent.

The Argument of the second Act.

- 1 **I**N the first Scene a Muntio declareth the successe of Arthur
warres in France, and Mordred's foile that resisted his lan-
ding.
- 2 **I**n the second Scene Mordred enraged at the ouerthrow, voy-
eth a second battaile, notwithstanding Conan's dissuasion
the contrarie.
- 3 **I**n the third Scene Galwin (brother to Mordred by the mo-
ther) with an Herald from Arthur to imparle of peace, but af-
some debate thereof peace is reiected.
- 4 **I**n the fourth Scene the King of Ireland & other forrein Prince
assure Mordred of their assistanc against Arthur.

The Argument and manner of the second dumbe shewe.

WHILES the Musicks sounded there came out of Mordred's house
man stately attyred representing a King, who walking once about the
Stage. Then out of the house appointed for Arthur, there came the
Nymphes apparaild accordingly, the first holding a Cornucopia in her hand, the
second a golden branch of Oliue, the third a sheaffe of Corne. These orde-
one after another offered these presents to the King who seemefully requited:

After the which there came a man bareheaded, with blacke long shagged haire downe to his shoulders, apparailled with an Irish Iacket and shirt, hauing an Irish dagger by his side and a dart in his hand. Who first with a threatening countenance looking about; and then spying the King, did furiously chase and driue him into *Mordred's* holse. The King represented *Mordred*. The three Nymphes with their proffers the treaiche of peace, for the which *Arthur* sent *Gawin* with an Herald vnto *Mordred* who reiected it: The Irish man signified Reuenge and Furie which *Mordred* conceiued after his foile on the Shoares, whereunto *Mordred* headlong yeeldeth himselfe.

THE SECOND act and first Scene.

Nuntius,

NUNT. **L** Here at length the stately type of Troy,
And Brytain land the promist seat of Brute,
Deckt with so many spoiles of conquered Kings.
Haile native soyle, these nine yeares space vnscene:
To thee hath long renowned Rome at last
Yeld up her hands, hereaft of former pompe.
But first inflamde with wonted valures heate,
Amidst our sorest sledge and thickest bayles,
She stoutly fought, and fiercely waged warres.
Tiberius courage gaue, upbaiding oft
The Romane force, their wonted lucke, and long
Retained rule, by warres throughtout the world.
What shame it were, since such atchieued spoiles,
And conquests gaind both farre and wide, to want
Of courage then, when most it should be mou'd.
How Brytaines erst paid tribute for their peace,
But now rebell, and dare them at their doyes:
For what was Fraunce but theirs? Here with incenst
They fiercely rau'd, a no bent their force a fressh.
Which *Arthur* spying, cryed with thundring voyce,
Fye, (Brytaines) fye: what hath betwixt you thus?
So many Nations folde, must Romans foile?
What slouth is this? Haue you forgot to warre,
Which ne'r knewe houre of peace? Turne to your foes,
Where you may bath in blood, and fight your fill.
Let courage worke: what can he not that dares?
Thus he pusht him guide in doubtfull warres,
A shame to him his foes, inflamde his friends.
Then yelding to his stately Stead the raigned,
He furious drines the Romaine troups about:
He plies each place, least Fate nought alter ought,
Pursuing hap, and vrging each successe.
He yelds in nought, but instantly persists
In all attempts, wherein what so withstands

His wish, he ioyes to worke a way by wacke,
And matching death to death, no passage seeks,
But what destruction works, with blade or blood.
He scornes the perilled way, he fiercely raues
To breake and bruse the ranks in thickest throngs,
All headlong bent, and prone to present spoile.

The foes infor't withstand; but much dismaide
They senselesse fight, whiles millions lose their liues.
At length Tiberius, pierst with point of speare,
Doth bleeding fall, enguard with deadly wound.
Hereat the rest recoil, and headlong flie,
Each man to saue himselfe. The battaile qualles
And Brytaines winne vnto their most renowne.

Then Arthur tooke Tiberius breathlesse Corse,
And sent it to the Senators at Rome,
With charge to say: This is the tribute due
Which Arthur ought, as time hereafter serues,
He'll pay the like againe; the whiles he rests
Your debtor thus. But O! this sweete successe
Pursu'd with greater harmes, turn'd stone to sootye.

For so: when foireine soiles and seas were past
With safe returne, and that the King should land:
Who, but his onely loue (O outrage rare)
With hugie host withstode him at the shoare?
There were prepaerd the foireine aides from farre,
There were the borrowd powers of diuers Kings,
There were our parents, brethren, sonnes and kinne,
Their wrath, their ire, there Mordred was the rage.
Where erst we sought abroad for foes to soile,
Beholde, our Fates had sent vs foes vnsought.
When foireine Realmes supplanted want supplie:
O blessed home, that hath such vnnie in store.

But let this part of Arthurs proweesse luke,
Nor let it e'r appeare by my report,
What monstrous mischiefes rane in ciuill warres.
O rather let due teares, and waylings want:
Let all in silence sinke, what hence is to be.
What best deserueth mention here, is this:
That Mordred banquish't trusted to his flight,
That Arthur ech where victor is return'd.

And so: where Mordred comes with heauy head,
He wields no slender waight that wields a Crowne. Exit.

The second scene.

Mordred, Conan,

MORD. **A**nd hath he wonne? Be Stronds' shores possesse?
Is Mordred foilde: the realme is yet vntoome?
And Mordred liues reuer'd for Arthurs death?

Well: 'twas my first conflict: I knew not yet
What warres requir'd: but now my sword is flesht,
And taught to goare and bath in hoarest blood.

Then thinke not Arthur that the Crowne is wonne:
The first successe may rue our next assault.
Euen at our next encounter (hap when 'tis will)
I vowe by Heauen, by Earth, by Hell, by all,
That either thou, or I, or both shall dye.

CONA. Fought shoulde be rashly vowde against your fire.

MORD. Whose breast is free from rage may some be aduise.

CONA. The best redresse for rage is to relent.

MORD. 'Tis better for a King to kill his foes.

CONA. So that the Subjects also indge them foes.

MORD. The Subjects must not indge their Kings decrees.

CONA. The Subjects force is great. ARTH. Greater the Kings.

CONA. The more you may, the more you ought to feare.

MORD. He is a foole, that feareth what he may.

CONA. Not what you may, but what you ought is iust,

MORD. He that amongst so many, so iniust,
Seekes to be iust, seekes perill to him selfe.

CONA. A greater perill comes by breach of lawes.

MORD. The Lawes doe licence as the Soueraigne lists.

CONA. Lett ought he list, whom lawes doe licence most.

MORD. Imperiall power abhorres to be restrainde.

CONA. As much doe meaner comes to be compeld.

MORD. The Fates haue heau'de and rais'de my force on high.

CONA. The gentler shoulde you presse those, that are low.

MORD. I would be feard: CONA. The cause why Subjects hate.

MORD. A Kingdom's kept by feare. CONA. And lost by hate.

He feares as man him selfe, whom many feare.

MORD. The numerous Subject dares attempt no change.

CONA. What dares not desperate dread? CONA. What torture threats.

CONA. I spare, twere safer to be lou'de. MORD. As safe

To be obaide. CONA. Whiles you command but well.

MORD. Where Rulers dare commaund but what is well:

Worsh is but prayer, commaundment but request.

CONA. If powre be ioynde with right, men must obey.

MORD. My will must goe for right. CONA. If they assent.

MORD. My sword shall force assent: CONA. No Gods forbid.

MORD. What shall I stande whiles Arthur sheds my blood?

And must I peeble my necke vnto the Axe?

Whom Fates contrayne, let him forgoe his blisse:

But he that needlesse yeldes vnto his bane,

When he may shynne, doth well deserue to loose

The good he cannot vse: who would be iust ayme

A bader life, that may maintaine the best:

We cannot part the Crowne: A regall Throne

Is not for two: The Scepter fittes but one.

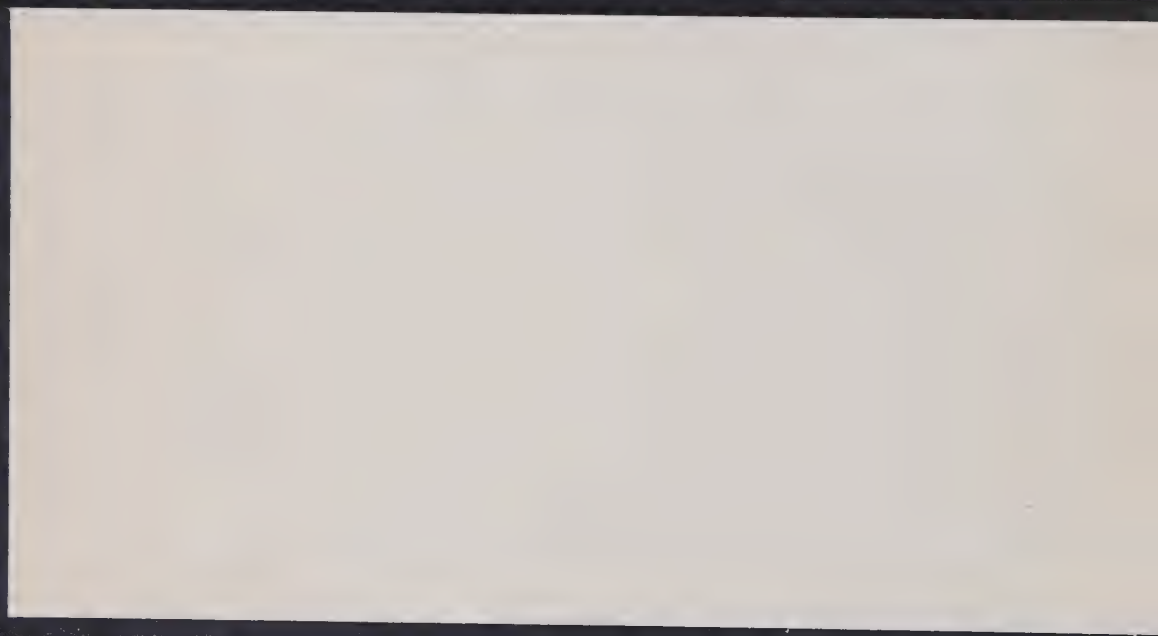
But whether is the fitter of vs two,

That must our swordes decerne: and shortly shall.

CONA. How much were you to be renowned more.

The Misfortunes of Arthur

The next page is a duplicate of B 4 recto showing the pasted-on "cancel" giving the revised reading: B 4 recto in the text shows the slip turned back and reveals the original reading.



If casting off these ruinous attempts,
 You would take care howe to supplie the losse,
 Which former warres, and foraine boyles haue wrought.
 Howe to deserue the peoples heartes with peace,
 With quiet rest, and deepe desired ease.

Not to increase the rage that long hath ragde,
 Nor to destroy the realme, you seeke to rule.
 Your father rearde it by, you plucke it downe.
 You loose your Countrey whyles you winne it thus:
 To make it yours, you strue to make it none.

Where Kings impole too much, the commons grudge
 Good will with drawes, assent becomes but slowe.

MORD. But I to gaine renoune, incurre my plague.

By hoping prayse sustaine an exiles life?

But I for Countreies ease diseale my selfe

By for their loue dispise my owne estate?

No. 'Tis my happe that Brytain serues my turne;

That feare of me doth make the Subjects crouch,

That what they grudge, they do constraind yeeld.

If their assents be slowe, my wrath is swift,

Whom fauour failes to bende, let furie breake.

If they be yet to learne, let terrour teach,

What Kings may doe, what Subjects ought to heare.

Then is a Kingdome at a wished staye,

When whatsoeuer the Souereigne wills, or niles,

Men be compelde as well to praise, as heare,

And Subjects willes inforced against their willes.

CONA. But who so seekes true praise, and iust renoune,

Would rather seeke their praying heartes, then tongues.

MORD. True praise may happen to the basest groome,

A forced prayse to none, but to a Prince.

I wish that most, that Subjects most repine.

CONA. But yet where warres doe threaten your estate,

There needeth friendes to fortifie your Crowne.

MORD. Each Crowne is made of that attractive mould,

That of it selfe it drawes a full defence.

CONA. That is a iust, and no vsurped Crowne.

And better were an exiles life, then thus

Disloyally to wronge your Sire and Ledge.

Thinke not that impious crimes can prosper long,

A time they scape, in time they be repalde.

MORD. The hugest crimes bring best successe to some.

CONA. Those some be rare. MORD. Why may not I be rare?

CONA. It was their hap. MORD. It is my hope. CONA. But hope

May misle, where hap doth hurle. MORD. So hap may hit,

Where hope doth aime. CONAN. But hap is last, and hope is first.

CONA. Yet feare: the first and last doe feld agree.

MORD. Day dare: the first and last haue many meanes.

But cease at length: your speech molests me much:

My minde is fixt. Since Mordred leaue to doe,

What Conan neither can allow, nor like.

CONA. But for an Herald sent from Arthurs host:
Gods graunt his message may portend our good.

The third scene.

Herald. Gawin, Mordred,

HERA. **Y**OUR Sire (O Prince) considering what distresse,
The Realme sustaines by both your mutuall warres,
Hath sent your brother Gawin Albane King
To treat of truce, and to imparle of peace.

MORD. Speake brother: what commandment sends my Sire?
What message doe you bring? By life, or death?

GAWL. A message farre vnmeste, most needefull cho.
The Sire commands not, where the Sonne rebels:
His loue descends too deepe to wish your death.

MORD. And mine ascends to high to wish his life.

GAWL. Yet thus he offereth: though your fautes be great,
And most disloyall to his deepe abuse:
Yet yeelde your selfe: he'll be as yone to grace,
As you to ruth: An Uncle, Sire, and Liedege.
And fitter were your due submission done,
Then wrongfull warres to reauue his right and Realme.

MORD. It is my fault, that he doth want his right:
It is his owne, to bere the Realme with warres.

GAWL. It is his right, that he attempts to seeke:
It is your wrong, that diueth him thereto.

MORD. T'is his insatiate minde, that is not so content,
Which hath so many Kingdomes moze besides.

GAWL. The moze you ought to tremble at his powre.

MORD. The greater is my conquest, if I winne.

GAWL. The moze your foile, if you should hap to lose.

For Arthurs fame, and ballure's such, as you
Should rather imitate, or at the least
Enuie, if hope of better families failede.
For whereas Enuie raignes, though it repines,
Yet doth it feare a greater then it selfe.

MORD. He that enuies the balure of his foe,
Detects a want of balure in himselfe.
He fondly fights, that fights with such a foe,
Where? were a shame to lose, no praise to winne:
But with a famous foe, succede what will,
To winne is great renowne, to loose lesse foile.
His conquests, were they moze, dismaie me not:
The oftner they haue beene, the moze they threat.
No danger can be thought both safe, and oft:
And who hath oftner waged warres then he?
Escapes secure him not: he owes the price:
Whom chaunce hath often mist, chaunce hits at length

- Oh, if that Chaunce haue furthered his successe,
So may the mine: for Chaunce hath made me king.
- GAWI. As Chaunce hath made you King, so Chaunce may change.
Shoulder for peace: that's it the highest piers,
No state except, even Conquerours ought to seeke.
Remember Arthurs strength, his conquests late,
His fierie mynde, his high aspiring heart.
Marke then the oddes: he expert, you vntried:
He ripe, you Greene: peeled you, whiles yet you may,
He will not peeled: he winnes his peace with warres.
- MORD. If Chaunce may change, his Chaunce was last to winne.
The likerier now to loose: his hautie heart
And minde I know: I feele mine owne no lesse.
As for his strength, and I kill, I leane to happen
Where many meete, it lies not all in one.
What though he vanquishd haue the Romaine troupest?
That bootes him not: him selfe is vanquishd here.
Then waigh your wordes againe: if Conquerours ought
To seeke for peace: The Conquered must perforce.
But he'll not peeled, he'll purchase peace with warres.
I tell: peeled that will: I neither will, nor can:
Come peace, come warres, chuse him: my danger's his,
His latterie mine, our states doe stande alike.
If peace be good, as good for him, as me:
If warres be good, as good for me, as him.
- GAWI. What Cursed warres (alas) were those, wherein
Both Sonne and sire shoulde so oppole themselves?
Him, whom you now vnhappy man pursue,
If you shoulde winne, your selfe would first bewaile.
Giue him his Crowne, to keepe it perill breeds.
- MORD. The Crowne I keepe my selfe: inue what will:
Death must be once: how soone, I least respect.
He best prouides that can beware in time,
Not why, nor when: but whence, and where he falls.
What foole, to line a yeare or twaine in rest,
Woulde loose the state, and honour of a Crowne?
- GAWI. Consider then your fathers griefe, and want:
Whom you bereaue of Kingdome, Realme, and Crowne.
- MORD. Trust me: a huge and mightie kingdome tis,
To beare the want of Kingdome, Realme, and Crowne.
- GAWI. A common want, which woordes ech worldlings woe,
That many haue too much, but none enough.
It were his praise, could he be so content.
Which makes you guiltie of the greater wrong.
Wherefore thinke on the doubtfull state of warres,
Where Mars hath sway, he keepes no certayne course.
Sometimes he lettes the weaker to preuaile,
Some times the stronger stoupes: hope, feare, and rage
With eyselle loit rules all, vncertayne good,
Most certayne harmes, be his assured happes.
No lucke can last, now here, now there it lighte:

No state alike, Chance blindly snatcheth all,
And Fortune maketh guiltie whom she listeth.

MORD. Since therefore feare, and hope, and happe in warres
Be all obscure, till their successe be seene:
Your speach doth rather daine me on to trie,
And trust them all, mine onely refuge now.

GAWI. And feare you not so strange and uncouth warres?

MORD. No, were they warres that grew from out the ground.

GAWI. No, yet your fire so huge, your selfe so small:

MORD. The smallest are may fell the hugest oake.

GAWI. No, that in falling him, your selfe may fall:

MORD. He falleth well, that falling kills his foe.

GAWI. No, common Chance whereto each man is thral:

MORD. Small manhood were to turne my backe to Chance.

GAWI. No, that, if Chance afflict, kings hooke it not:

MORD. I beare no breast so vnpreparde for harmes.

Even that I holde the kingliest point of all,

To hooke afflictions well: And by how much

The more his state and tottering Empire saggeth,

To fire so much the faster foote on ground.

No feare but both foeludge, and many fall

Into their Fate, whiles they doe feare their Fate.

All here courage quailles, the feare exceeds the harme,

Dea worse than warre it selfe, is feare of warre.

GAWI. Warre seemeth sweete to such as haue not tried:

But wisdom twis we should forecast the worst.

The end allowes the act: that plot is wise,

That knowes his meanes, and least relies on Chance.

Eschue the course where error lurkes, the it growes

But griefe, where paine is spent, no hope to speed.

Strive not about your strength: for where your force

Is ouer matchte with your attempts, it faints,

And fruitlesse leaues, what bootlesse it began.

MORD. All things are ruide in constant course: No Fate

But is foreset, The first dale leades the last.

No wisdom them: but difference in conceit,

Which workes in many men, as many mindes.

You loue the meane, and follow vertues race:

I like the top, and aime at greater blisse.

You rest content, my minde aspires to more:

In briefe, you feare, I hope: you doubt, I dare.

Since then the sagest counsailes are but strifes,

Where equall wits may breast each side alike,

Let counsaile go: my purpose must proceede:

Each likes his course, mine owne doth like me best.

Therefore e'r Arthur breath, or gather strength,

Assault we him: least he assault vs first.

We either must destroy, or be destroyde.

The mischiefes in the midst: catch he that can.

GAWI. But will no reason rule that desperate minde?

MORD. A sickle minde: that euery reason rules.

I rest resolu'd : and to my Sire say thus:
If here he stay but three daies to an end,
And not forthwith discharge his band and hoast,
This Mordreds oath : assure himselfe to die.
But if he finde his courage so to serue,
As for to stand to his defence with force:
In Cornewaile if he dare, I'le trye it out.

GAWL. O strange contempt : like as the craggy rocke,
Resists the streames, and flings the watering waues
A losse, so he rejects and scornes my words. Exit.

The fourth scene.

Gilla, Gillamor, Cheldrichus,
Dux Pictorum, Conan,

MORD. **L** O, where (as they decreed) my faithfull friends
haue kept their time, be all your powers repaired?

GILLA. They be : and all with ardent mindes to Mars,
They cry for warres, and longing for th' alarme
Euen now they wish t' encounter with their foes.

MORD. What could be wisht for more : Durlant King,
For your great helpe and valiant Irish force,
If I obtaine the conquest in these warres,
Whereas my father claimes a tribute due
Out of your Realme, I here renounce it quite.
And if assistance neede in doubtfull times,
I will not faile to aide you with the like.

GILL. It doth suffice me to discharge my Realme,
Or at the least to wake me on my foes.
I rather like to liue your friend and pierce,
Then rest in Arthurs homage and disgrace.

MORD. Right noble Duke, through whom the Saxons bowe
Their liues with mine, for my defence in warres:
If we preuaile and may subdue our foes :
I will in liew of your so high deserts,
Geue you and yours all Brytish lands that lie
Betwene the flood of Humber, and the Scottes,
Besides as much in Kent as Horlus and
Hengistus had, when Vortigern was King.

CHEL. Your gracious proffers I accept with thanks,
Not for the gaine, but that the good desire
I haue henceforth to be your subiect here,
May thereby take effect : which I esteeme
More then the rule I heare in Saxon toyle.

MORD. (Renowned Lord) for your right hardy Picts,
And chosen warriors to maintaine my cause,
If our attempts receive a good successe,
The Albane Crowne I giue to you and yours.

PICT. Your highnes bountie in so high degree,
 Wille cause inough to moue me to my best.
 But sure your selfe, without regard of meede,
 Should finde both me and mine at your commaund,

MORD. Lord Gilla, if my hope may take successe,
 And that I be thereby vndoubted King,
 The Cornish Dukedome I allot to you.

GILL. A. My Liege to further your desire attempts,
 I topfully shall spend my dearest blood.
 The rather, that I found the King your Sire
 So heauy Lord to me, and all my stocke.

MORD. Since then our rest is on^d, and we agreed
 To warre it out: what resteth now but bloodes?
 Diuine Destries on with swords, Mars frames the meanes,
 Henceforth what Mordred may, now lies in you:
 Ere long if Mars insue with good successe,
 Look whatsoe'r it be, that Arthur claimes.
 By right, or by ouer, or conquests gaind with blood,
 In Brytaine, or abroade is mine to giue.
 To shewe I would haue said: I cannot giue,
 What euery hand must giue vnto it selfe.
 Whereof who lists to purchase any share,
 Now let him seeke and winne it with his Sword:
 The Fates haue laide it open in the field.

What Starres (O Heauens) or Doles, or Powers diuine
 Doe graunt so great rewards for thole that winne:
 Since then our common good, and ech mans care
 Requires our ioint assistance in these toyles:
 Shall we not hazard our extreamest hap,
 And rather spend our Fates, then spare our foes?

The cause, I care for most, is chiefly yours:
 This hand and hart shall make mine owne secure.
 That man shall see me foiled by my selfe,
 What e'r he be, that sees my foe vnfolde.

Fear not the feild because of Mordreds faults,
 Nor thinke one totte the more for Arthurs right.
 Full safely Fortune guideth many a guilt,
 And Fates haue none but wretches whom they twanche.
 Wherefore make speede to cheare your Souldiers harts,
 That to their fires you yet may adde more flames.

The side that seekes to winne in ciuill warres,
 Must not content it selfe with woonted heate.

Exeunt omnes preter Mordred & Cona.

CONA. Would God your highnes had beene more aduise,
 Ere too much will had drawen your toils too farre:
 Then had no warres indangered you, nor yours,
 Nor Mordreds cause required forreine care.

MORD. A troubled head: my minde reuolts to feare,
 And beares my body backe: I inwards feele my fall.

My thoughts misgave me much : do woe terror :
Perceiv mine ende : and desperate though I must
Despise Dispaire, and somewhat hopelesse hope.
The more I doubt, the more I dare : by feare
I finde the fact is fittest for my fame.

What though I be a ruine to the Realme,
And fall my selfe therewith : No better end.
His last mishaps doe make a man secure.
Such was King Priams ende, who, when he dyed,
Clothe and wrapt up his Kingdome in his death.
A solemne pompe, and fit for Mordreds minde,
To be a graue and tombe to all his Realme.

Exeunt.

CHORVS.

1 We Princely Peeres extold to seates of State,
Seeke not the faire, that soone will turne to foule:
It is the fall of high and howering Fae,
And rare the roome, which time doth not controule.
The safest seate is not on highest hill,
Where windes, and stormes, and thunders thumpe their ill.
Farre safer were to follow sound aduise,
Then for such pride to pay so deare a price.

2 The mounting minde that elimes the hauty cliftes,
And soaring seekes the top of lofty tytes,
Intoxicates the braine with giddy duffs,
Then rooles, and reels, and falls at length plum tytes.
Loe : heaving hie is of so small foecast,
To totter first, and tumble doone at last.
Pet Regulus still reares himselfe on hie,
And coltishly doth kicke the cloudes in Skie.

3 Who sawe the griefe engraven in a Croone,
Or knew the bad and hane whereto it's bound:
Would neuer sticke to throwe and fling it doone,
Nor once vouchsafe to heave it from the ground.
Such is the sweete of this ambitious pompe,
No sooner had, then turne de esthones to sotoz:
Archien'd with enule, exercilde with hate,
Garbed with feare, supported with debate.

4 Worthlesse race of high aspyring head,
Dworthlesse rule both pittied and unled:
How many Billions to their losse you lead:
With loue and lure of Kingdomes blisse vnrep'd:
So things untast'd canle a quenchlesse thirst,
Which, were they knowne, would be refused first,
Dea, oft we see, yet seeing cannot shonne
The fact, we finde as fondly dar'd, as doone.

The

The argument of the third Act.

- 1 IN the first Scene Cador and Howell incite and exhort Arthur vnto warre: Who moued with Fatherly affection towards his sonne, notwithstanding their perswasions resolueth vpon peace.
- 2 In the second Scene, an Herault is sent from Morgred to commaund Arthur to discharge his armies vnder paine of death, or otherwise if he dare, to trie it by Battaille.
- 3 In the third Scene Arthur calleth his Assistants and Souldiers together, whom he exhorteth to pursue their foes.
- 4 In the fourth Scene Arthur between griefe and despaire resolueth to warre.

The Argument and manner of the third dumbe shewe.

During the Musicke after the second Act. There came vpon the stage two gentlemen attyred in peaceable manner, which brought with them a Table, Carpet, and Cloth; and then hauing covered the Table they furnisht it with incense on the one ende, and banquetting dishes on the other ende; Next there came two gentlemen apparellled like Souldiers with two naked Swordes in their handes, the which they laide a crosse vpon the Table. Then there came two sumptuously attyred and warrelike, who, spying this preparation smelled the incense and tasted the banquet. During the which there came a Messenger and deliuered certaine letters to those two that fedde on the dainties: who, after they had well viewed and perused the letters, furiously sung the banquet vnder seeter and violently snatching the Swardes vnto them, they hastily went their way. By the first two that brought in the banquet was meant the seruants of Peace, by the second two were meant the seruants of Warre; By the two last were meant Arthur and Cador, By the Messenger and his Letters was meant the defiance from Morgred.

THE THIRD ACT

and Fyrste scene.

Arthur, Cador, Howell.

ARTH. IS this the welcome that my Realme prepares?
 Be these the thanks I winne for all my warres?
 Thus to forbid me land? to slaine my friends?
 To make their blood distaine my Countrie shores?
 My sonne (belike) least that our force should faile
 For want of warres, prepare he warres himselfe.
 We thought (perhaps) it mought empaire our fame,

If none rebeld, whose stile might make our power.
Is this the time of Mordreds forward youth,
And tender age discreet beyond his yeres?
O false and guiltfull life, O craftie world!
How cunningly conniaist thou fraude vilenesse
Chamburions seemeth meeke, the wanton chaff,
Disguised vice for vertue want's it selfe.

Thus (Arctini) thus hath Fortune plaid her part,
Blinde for thy weale, cleare sighten for thy woe.
Thy kingdome's gone, thy phere affordes no faith,
Thy sonne rebels, of all thy wonted pompe
No tot is left, and Fortune hides her face.

No place is left for prosperous plight, misshaps
haue roome and waies to runne and walke at will.

Lo (Cador) both our states, your daughter's trust,
My sonn's respect, our hopes repolde in both.

CADO. The time (pulsant Prince) permits not now
To moane our wrongs, or leaue each severall soere.
Since Arthur thus hath ransackt all abroad,
What meruaile ist, if Mordred saue at home?
When farre and neere your warres had wayne the world,
What warres were left for him, but euill warres,

All which requires reuenge with sword and fire,
And to pursue your foes with presence force.

In iust attempts Mars giues a rightfull doome.

ARTH. Nay rather (Cador) let them runne their race,
And leaue the Heauens reuengers of my wrong.
Since Brytaines prosperous state is thus debaile
In seruile soyt to Mordreds cursed yilde,
Let me be thral, and leade a priuate life:

None can refuse the yoke his Countrie beares.
But as for warres, insooth my flesh abhorres,
To bid the battayle to my proper blood.

Great is the loue, which nature doth inforce
From kin to kin, but most from sire to soune.

HOWE. The noble necke disdaines the seruile yoke,
Where rule hath please, subiection seemeth strange.
A King ought alwaies to preferre his Realme,
Before the loue he beares to kin or soune.

Your Realme destrouide is neere restord againe,
But time may lend you kine and sonnes inough.

ARTH. How hard it is to rule th'aspiring minde,
And what a kingly point it seemes to chole,
Whose Lordlie hands the stately Scepter swales,
Still to pursue the dust they first decreed:
My wonted minde and kingdome lets me know.

Thinke not, but if you dye this hazard on,
He desperate will resolve to winne or die:
Whereof who knowes which were the greater guilt,
The sire to slay the soune, or soune the sire.

CADO. If bloudie Mars doe so extremely swale,

That either Sonne or fire must needs be slaine,
 Give Lawe the choice: let him die that deserues.

Each impotent affection notes a want.

No worse a vice then lenitie in Kings,
 Remisse indulgence soone vndoos a Realme.

He teacheth how to sinne, that winkes at sinnes,
 And bids offend, that suffereth an offence.

The onely hope of leaue increaseth crimes,

And he that pardoneth one, emboldneth all
 To breake the Lawes. Each patience fostereth wrongs.

But vice severely punisht fautes at foote,
 And creepes no further off, then where it falls.

One sower example will preuent more vice,
 Than all the best persuasions in the world.

Rough rigour looks out right, and still preuailes:

Smooth mildnesse looks too many waies to thine.

Therefore since Mordreds crimes haue wrongd the Lawes

In so extreame a sort, as is too strange:

Let right and iustice rule with rigours aide,

And worke his wacke at length, although too late:

That damning Lawes, so damned by the Lawes,

Hee may receiue his deepe deserued doome.

So let it fare to ith all, that dare the like:

Let sword, let fire, let torments be their end.

Seueritie vpholds both Realme and rule.

ARTH. Ah too seuer, farre from a fathers minde.

Compassion is as fit for Kings as wrath.

Lawes must not looke. Rule oft admitteth ruth.

So hate, as if there were yet cause to loue:

Take not their liues as foes, which may be friends.

To spoile my some were to dispoile my selfe:

Oft, whyles we seeke our foes, we seeke our foiles.

Let's rather seeke how to allure his minde

With good deserts: deserts may winne the worst.

HOWE. Where Cato first had saued a theefe from death,

And after was himselfe condemn'd to die:

When else not one would execute the doome,

Who but the theefe did vnder take the task?

If too much bountie worke so bad effects

In thanklesse friends, what for a ruthlesse foe?

Let Lawes haue still their course, the ill disposd

Grudge at their liues, to whom they owe too much.

ARTH. But yet where men with reconciled mindes

Renue their loue with recontinued grace,

Attonement frames them friends of former foes,

And makes the moodes of swelling wrath to swage,

No faster friendship, than that growes from griefe,

When melting mindes with mutuall ruth relent.

How close the seuered skinne vnites againe,

When salues haue smoothly heald the former hurt?

CATO. I neuer yet sawe hurt so smoothly heald,

But

But that the skarre bewaile the former wound:
Dea, where the salme did soonest close the skinn,
The soze was oftner couered vp than cur'd.
Which festering deepe and silde within, at last
With sodaine breach grew greater than at first.
What then for mindes, which haue reuenging moodes,
And ne'r forget the crosse they forced beare?
Whereto if reconcilment come, it makes
The t'one secure, whiles t'other workes his will.
Attonement field defeates, but oft defers
Reuenge: beware a reconciled foe.

ARTH. Well, what anasles to linger in this life,
Which Fortune but reserves for greater griefe?
This breath draws on but matter of mishap:
Death onely frees the guiltlesse from anoles.
Who so hath felt the force of greedie Fates,
And dur'd the last decree of gristle death,
Shall neuer yeeld his captiue armes to chaines,
As a dratme in triumph decke the victors pompe.
HOWE. What meane these wordes? Is Arthur forc'd to feare,
Is this the fruit of your continuall warres,
Euen from the first remembrance of your youth?

ARTH. By youth (I graunt) and prime of budding yeares
Dust vp with pride and fond desire of praise,
Foreweening nought what perils might ensue,
Aduentured all, and raught to will the raignes.
But now this age requires a sager counsell,
And will aduill be by harmes to wisdoms yeelds.
Those swelling spirits the selfe same cause which first
Set them on gog, euen Fortunes fauours quaild.
And now mine oftmost skayes doe I haue me most,
I feare the trappes, whereto I oft haue tript:
Experience tels me plaine that Chance is fragile,
And oft, the better past, the worse to come.

CADO. Resist these doubts: tis ill to yeeld to harmes.
Tis safest then to dare when most you feare.

ARTH. As safe sometimes to feare, when most we dare.
A causelesse courage giues repentance place.

HOWE. If Fortune satune. ARTH. Each waile on me the frowns.
For winne I loose I, both procure my griefe.

CADO. But ease you winne, what griefe? ARTH. Admit I doe,
What to? CADO. Then may you rule. ARTH. When I may die.

CADO. To rule is much. ARTH. Small if we conet naught.

CADO. Tho couets not a Crowne. ARTH. He that discernes
The swoord aloft. CADO. That hangerth fast. ARTH. But by
A haire. CADO. Right holdes it vp. ARTH. Wrong puld it downe.

CADO. The Commons helpe the King. ARTH. They sometimes hurt.

CADO. At least the Peeres. ARTH. Stead if allegiance want.

CADO. Yet Soueraigntie. ARTH. Not, if subiection faile.

CADO. Doubt not, the Realme is yours. ARTH. T'was mine till now.

CADO. And shall be still. ARTH. If Mordred list. CADO. T'were well

Your crowne were twonne. ARTH. Perhaps tis better lost

IOWE. The name of rule should moue a princely minde.

ARTH. Trust me, bad things haue often glorious names.

IOWE. The greatest good that Fortune can afford.

ARTH. A dangerous good that wisdom would eschue.

HOWE. Yet waigh the heartesale of the olde renowne,

And Fame the Wonderer of the former age:

Which still extolls the facts of worthiest wights,

Preferring no desert before your deeds.

Euen she reports you to this new attempts,

Which lest interde your winnings be but losse.

ARTH. Small credit will be giuen of matters past

To Fame, the flatterer of the former age.

Were all belieu'd which antique buice imports,

Yet wisdom waighes the perill ioinde to praise:

Rare is the Fame (marke well all ages gone)

Which hath not hurt the houle it most enhaun't.

Besides, Fame's but a blast that sounds a while,

And quickly stints, and then is quite forgot.

Looke what for't our vertues haue atchieu'd,

The Chaos wast and greedy time deuours.

To day all Europe rings of Arthurs praise:

Twill be as hush, as if I ne'r had beene.

What bootes it then to venture life or lumme,

CADO. For that, which needes e'r long we leaue, or loose,

Can blinde affection so much bleare the wise,

O loue of gracelesse Sonne so witch the Sire?

What what concerns the honour of a Prince?

With Countreys good and Subjects lust request,

Should lightly be contemned by a King?

When Lucius sent but for his tribute due,

You went with thirteene Kings to roote him out:

Hane Romaines, for requiring but their owne,

Aboad your nine yeares hunts: Shall Mordred scape,

That wrong'd you thus in honour, Queene, and Realme?

Were this no cause to stirre a King to wrath,

Yet should your Conquests late atchieu'd gainst Rome

Inflame your minde with thirst of full reuenge.

ARTH. Indee'de, continuall warres haue chafte our mindes,

And good successe hath bred impatient moodes.

Rome puffes vs up, and makes vs too too fierce:

There, Brytaines, there we stand, whence Rome did fall.

Thou Lucius mak'st me proude, thou hea'r'st my minde:

But what? shall I esteeme a Crowne ought else,

Then as a gorgeous Crest of easlesse Helme,

Or as some brittle mould of glorious pompe,

Or glittering glasse, which, whiles it shines, it breakes?

All this a sodaine Chaunce may dash, and not

Perhaps with thirteene Kings, or in nine yeares:

All may not finde so slowe and lingring Fates.

What, that my Countrey cries for due reuenge

And

And some reliefe for long sustained toyles?
By Seas and Lands I dayly wrought her wrecke,
And sparelesse spent her life on euerie foe.
Eche where my Souldiers perisht, whilst I wonne:
Throughout the world my Conquest was their spoile.
A faire reward for all their deaths, for all
Their warres abroad, to giue them ciuill warres.
What bootes it them referu'd from foireine folles
To die at home? What ende of ruthlesse rages?
At least let age, and Nature worne to nought,
Vnroule at length their graues with withed groanes.
Dirty their hoary haire, their feeble fist,
Their withered lims, their strengths consume in Campe.
Must they still ende their liues amongst the blades?
Rests there no other Fate whilst Arthur raignes?
What doeme you me? a furie fedde with blood,
Or some Ciclopian boine and byed for braules?
Thinke on the minde, that Arthur beares to peace:
Can Arthur please you no where but in warres?
Be witnesse Heauens how farre 'tis from my minde,
Therewith to spoile or lacke my native soile:
I cannot peeble, it brookes not in my breast,
To seeke her ruine, whom I erst haue rui'de.
What reliques now so e'r both ciuill broyles,
And foireine warres haue left, let those remaine:
Th'are fewe enough, and Brytaines fall too fast.

The second scene.

An Herault from Mordred.

HOWE. **L** Here an Herault sent from Mordreds Campe,
A froward message, if I reede aright:
He mought not stirre his wrath: perhaps this may:
Persuasions cannot moue a Brytaines mood,
And yet none sooner stung with present wrong.
HERAY. Haile perrelesse Prince, whilst Fortune would, our King,
Though now bereft of Crowne and former rule.
Touchsafe me leane my message to impart,
No iotte insoist, but as your Sonne affords.
If here you stay but thre dayes to an ende,
And not forthwith discharge your bands and host,
It's Mordreds oath: Assure your selfe to die.
But if you finde your courage so to serue,
As for to stand to your defence with force,
In Cornewell (if you dare) he'll trye it out.
ARTH. Is this the choyce my Sonne doth send his Sire,
And must I die? Or trye it if I dare?
To die were ill, thus to be dar'd is worse.

Display

Display my standard forth, let Trumpe and Drumme
Call Souldiers nere, to heare their Soueraignes heark.

The third scene.

Gawlin King of Albanie, Aschillus King of Den-
marke, King of Norway. A number
of Souldiers.

ARTH. **O** Friends and fellows of my werrest toyles,
Which haue borne out with me so many bunts,
And desperate itornes of wars and brainlicke Mars:
Loe now the hundredth month wherein we winne.
Hath all the blond we spent in foreine Coasts,
The wounds, and deaths, and winters boad abroad,
Deserued thus to be disgrac'd at home?
All Brytaine rings of warres: No towne, nor feld
But swarmes with armed troupes: the mustering traines
Stop vp the streets: no lesse a tumult's raise,
Then when Hengist fell and Horius ferte
With treacherous truce did ouerrunne the Realme.
Each corner threatneth Death: both farre and nere
Is Arthur best. What if my force had faild,
And standarde false, and ensignes all beene to me,
And Roman troupes pursude me at the heeles,
With lucklesse warres afraid in foreine soiles?
Now that our Fortune heauens vs vp thus hie,
And heauens themselves renewe our olde renowne:
Must we be darder? Nay, let that Pincocke come,
That knowes not yet himselfe, nor Archurs force,
That ne'r yet waged warres, that's yet to learne
To giue the charge: Wea let that Pincocke come,
With todayne Souldyers pampered vp in peace,
And gowned troupes, and wantons wome with ease:
With sluggish Saxons crewe, and Irish kernes,
And Scottish aide, and false redhanked piks,
Whose slaughters yet must teach their former foyle.
They shall perceaue with sorrow e'r they part,
When all their toyles be tolde, that nothing workes
So great a wast and rume in this age,
As doe my warres. O Moreed blessed Sonne:
No doubt, these market mates so highly hie'd
Must be the stay of thy blurped state.
And least my head inclining now to yeares,
Should ioy the rest, which yet it neuer reapt:
The Traytor Gills, trauid in treacherous farres,
Is chiefe in armes, to reauue me of my Realme.
What corner (ah) for all my warres shall shew
My lucklesse age: what seate for due deserts?

What towne, or field for ancient Souldiers rest?
What house? What castle? What walls for wretched times?
Stretch out againe, stretch out your conquering hands,
Still must we use the force so often blde.
To those, that will pursue a wrong with weake,
We giue th all, that once denies the right.

Thou soile which erst Diana did ordaine
The certaine seate and boyme of wandring Bruter
Thou Realme which ay I reuerence as my Saint,
Thou stately Brytaine thy auncient tipe of Troy,
Beare with my forced wrongs: I am not he,
That willing would impeach thy peace with warres.
Lo here both farre and wide I Conquero; stand,
Arthur each where thine owne, thy Liege, thy King.
Condemne not mine attempts: he, onely he
Is sole in fault, that makes me thus thy foe.

Here I renounce all leagues and treats of truce,
Thou Fortune henceforth art my garde and guide.
Hence peace, on warres, runne Faces, let Mars be iudge,
I erst did trust to right, but now to rage.

Goe: tell the boy that Arthur feares no bags,
In vaine he seekes to haue it with his Sire.
I come (Mordred) I come, but to thy paine.
Dea, tell the boy his angry father comes,

To teach a Shoulde both to die, and dare. Herakle Exe.

HOWE.

If we without offence (O greatest guide
Of Brytish name? may poure our iust complaints;
We most mislike that you too milde a moode
Hath thus withheld our hands and swords from strokes.

For what were we behind in any helpe?
O without cause did you misdoubt our force,
O truth so often tried with good successe?

Goe to: Conduct your army to the felds,
Place man to man, oppose vs to our foes:

CADO.

As much we neede to worke, as with your weale.
Seemes it to sowe to winne by ciuill warres?

Were it to goare with Pike my fathers brest,
Were it to rine and cleaue my brothers head,
Were it to teare peccemeale my dearest childe,
I would inforce my grudging handes to helpe.

I cannot terme that place my native soyle,
Whereto your trumpets send their warlike sounds.

If case requir'd to batter downe the Townes
Of any Towne, that Arthur would destroy:

Dea, wert of Brytanes selfe, which most I reuer:

Her bulwarkes, fortresse, rampiers, walles and fence,
These armes should reare the Rams to runne them downe.

Wherefore ye Princes, and the rest my mates,

If what I haue auerd in all your names,
Be likewise such as stands to your content,

Let all your Deas anoth my promise true.

SOVL. Prea, yea, &c.

ASCH. Wherein renowned King my selfe, or mine,
By life, my Kingdome, and all Denmarke pollye
May serue your turne, account them all your owne.

KING And whatsoe'r my force or Norwaie aide

of Norway. May helpe in your attempts, I vow it here.

GAWL. As heretofore I alwayes serue your heast,
So let this daie be iudge of Gawins trust.
Either my brother Mordred dies the death
By mine assault, or I at least by his.

ARTH. Since thus (my faithfull mates) with vowes alike,
And equall loue to Arthurs cause you ioyn
In common care, to breake my priuate wrongs:
Lift vp your Ensignes eies, stretch out your strengths,
Pursue your Fates, performe your hopes to Mars,
Loe here the last and outmost worke for blades.

This is the time that all our valour craues.

This time by due desert restores againe

Our goods, our lands, our liues, our weale and all.

This time declares by Fates whole cause is best,

This, this condemnes the vanquish't side of guilt.

Wherefore if for my sake you scoine your selues,

And spare no sword nor spee in my defence:

Then whiles my censure iustifies your cause,

Fight, fight amaine: and cleare your blades from crime.

The Iudge once chang'd, no warres are free from guilt.

The better cause giues vs the greater hope

Of prosperous warres, wherein if once I hap

To spie the wonted signes, that neuer faile

Their guide, your threatening lookes, your fire eies,

And busling bodie prest to present spoile:

The field is wonne. Then then me thinks I see

The wonted waits and scattered heads of foes,

The Irish carcass kickt, and Pietes oppress,

And Saxons slaine, to swim in streames of bloud.

I quake with hope. I can assure you all,

Tell neuer had a greater match in hand.

March on: delaye no Fates whiles Fortune fauours,

The greatest praise of warres consists in speed.

Exeunt Regis et Cohors.

The fourth scene.

Cador, Arthur.

CADO. Since thus Victorious King your Deeres, allies,
Your Lords, and all your potoyes be ready prest,
For good, for bad, for whatsoe'r shall hap,
To spend both iuune and life in your defence;
Cast of all doubts, and rest your selfe on Mars:

ARTH. A hopelesse feare forbids a happy Fate.
 In looth (good Cador) so our Fortune fares,
 As needes we must returne to wonted force.
 To warres we must: but such unhappy warres,
 As yeld no hope for right or wrong to scape.
 My selfe forelees the Face, it cannot fall
 Without our dearest blood: much may the minde
 Of penfull Sirr. presage, whose Sonne so sinnes.
 All truth, all trust, all blood, all bands be broke,
 The seedes are sowne that spring to future spoyle,
 By Sonne, my Nephew, yea each side my selfe,
 Neuer then all (woe's me) too nere, my foe.
 Tell: 'tis my plague for life so letably ledde,
 The price of guilt is still a heavier guilt.
 For were it light, that eu'n by birth my selfe
 Was bad, I made my sister bad: nay were
 That also light, I haue begot as bad.
 Pea worse, an heire assignde to all our sinnes.
 Such was his birth: what base, what vulgar vice
 Could once be lookt for of so noble blood?
 The deeper guilt descends, the more it rootes:
 The younger tumps affect the huger crimes. Exeunt.

CHORVS.

I When many men assent to ciuill warres,
 And yelde a suffradge to inforce the Faces;
 No man bethinkes him of his owne mishappe,
 But turnes that lucke vnto an other's share.
 Whereas if feare did first forewarne ech foyle,
 Such loue to fight would breed no Brytains hane.
 And better were still to preserve our peace,
 Then thus to vent for peace through waging warres.
 That follie to forgoe such certayne happes,
 And in their steede to feede vncertayne hopes?
 Such hopes as oft hane putt by many a Realme,
 Till croffe successe hath prest it downe as deepe:
 Whiles blind affection fetcht from pvtate cause
 Misguiding wit hath maskt in wisdom's baile,
 Pretending what in purpose it abhorreth.

2 Peace hath three foes incamped in our breasts,
 Ambition, Wrath, and Enuie: which subdude,
 We should not faile to finde eternall peace.
 'Tis in our powre to lop it all at will,
 And fewe there be, but if they will, they may:
 But yet euen those, who like the name of peace,
 Through fond desire repine at peace it selfe.
 Betwæne the hope whereof, and it it selfe,
 A thousand things may fall: that further warres.
 The very speech sometimes and treats of truce,
 Is slayt and cut a sunder with the sword.

Dothfield the name of peate doth edge our mindes,
And sharpeneth on our furie till we fight:
So that the mention made of loue and rest
Is oft a whetstone to our hate and rage.

- 3 To here the end, that Kingly pompe imparts,
The quiet rest, that Princely pallace plights.
Care upon care, and euery day a newe
Fresh vsing tempest tires the tossed mindes.
Who strues to stand in pompe of Princely port,
On giddy top and culme of slippery Court,
Finds oft a heauy Fate, whiles too much knowne
To all, he failes vnknowne vnto himselfe.
Let who so else that list, affect the name,
But let me seeme a Potentate to none:
My slender barke shall creepe anent the shore,
And shunne the Windes, that sweepe the waltering waues.
I should Fortune ouerhippes the safest Roades,
And seekes vniost the surging Seas those Rieles,
Whose lofty tops and tacklings touch the Cloudes.

- 4 O base, yet happy Boies! O giftes of Gods
Scant yet perceau'd: when poudred Crimine roabes
With secrete sighes mistrusting their extreames,
In barlefull breast forecast their foultring Fates,
And stirre, and stirre, and stoppe, and all in vaine:
Behold, the Deafane poore with tattered coate,
Whose eyes a meaner Fortune feedes with sleepe,
How safe and sound the carelesse Snudge doth sleepe.
How roosted turkes the house of slender hap,
Costlesse, not gay without, scant cleane within:
Yet safe: and oftner shroudes the hoary haire,
Then haughty Turrets rearde with curious art,
To harbour heads that wield the golden Crest.
With endlesse carke in glorious Courts and Townes,
The troubled hopes and trembling feares doe dwell.

The Argument of the fourth Act.

- 1 IN the first Scene Gildas and Conan conferre of the state of
Wytaine.
2 In the Second Scene Punting maketh report of the whole bate
taile, with the death of Mordred and Arthurs and Cadors
deadly wound.
3 In the third Scene Gildas and Conan lament the infortunate
state of the Countrie.

The

*The Argument and manner of the
fourth dumbe shewe.*

DVring the Musicke appointed after the third act, there came a Lady Countess attyred with a counterfaite Childe in her armes, who walked softly the Stage. From an other place there came a King Crowned, who likewise walked on an other part of the Stage. From a third place there came foure Soulers all armed, who spying this Lady and King, vpon a sodaine pursued the Lady from whom they violently tooke her Childe and flung it against the walles; She in mournfull sort wringing her hands passed her way. Then in like manner they sette on the King, tearing his Crowne from his head, and casting it in peeces vnder feete draue him by force away; And so passed themselves ouer the Stage. This was meant the fruit of Warre, which spareth neither man woman nor child with the ende of *Mordreds* vsurped Crowne.

THE FOVRTH ACT
and first scene.

Gildas. Conan.

GILD.

LORD Conan, though I know how hard a thing
It is, for mindes traunde vp in Princely Thrones,
To heare of ought against their humors course:
Yet: sithence who forbiddeth not offence,
If well he may, is cause of such offence:
I could haue wisht (and blame me not my Lord)
Your place and countenance both with Sonne and Sire,
Had more preuaillde on either side, then thus
I haue left a Crowne in danger for a Crowne
Through ciuill warres, our Countries twonted woe.
Whereby the Kingdom's wound still festring deepe,
Sucks vp the mischiefes humor to the hart.

The staggering state of Brytaines troubled braines,
Headache, and soze incumbred in her Crowne,
With guldiddy steps runnes on a headlong race.
Whereto this tempest tend's, or where this storme
Will breake, who knowes? But Gods auert the worst.

CONA.

Now surely (Gildas) as my duty stood,
Indifferent for the best to Sonne and Sire;
So I protest since these occasions grewe,
That in the depth of my desire to please,
I more esteeme what honest faith requir'd
In matters meete for their estates and place:
Than how to feede each fond affection prone
To bad effects, whence their disgrace mought growe.
And as for *Mordreds* vsperate and Villanall plots,

They

They had bene none, or fewer at the least,
 Had I prevail'd: which Arthur knowes right well.
 But eu'n as Counters goe sometimes for one,
 Sometimes for thousands more, sometimes for none:
 So men in greatest countenance with their King,
 Can worke by fit perswasion sometimes much:
 But sometimes lesse: and sometimes nought at all.

GILD. Well: wee that haue not spent our time in warres,
 But bent our course at peace, and Countreies weale,
 May rather now expect what strange euent,
 And Chaunce insues of these so rare attempts:
 Then enter to discourse vpon their cause,
 And erre as wide in wordes, as they in deedes.

GONA. And Lo: to satisfie your wish therein,
 Whence comes a Souldier sweating from the Camps.

The second scene.

Nuncius,

NVNC. **T**HU Echo shall that haunts the hollow hills,
 Leave off that wont to snatch the latter word:
 Howle on a whole discourse of our distress,

GILD. Clippe of no clause: found out a perfect sense.
 What fresh mishap (alas) what newe annoy,
 Remoues our pensure mindes from wonted woes,
 And yet requires a newe lamenting mode?
 Declare: we ioy to handle all our harmes:
 Our many griefes haue taught vs still to mourne.

NVNC. But (ah) my tongue denies my speech his aid:
 Great force doth driue it forth: a greater keeps
 It in. True surpise with wantlesse woes.

CONA. Speake on, what griefe so e'r our Faces afford.

NVNC. Small griefes can speake: the great astonish stand.

GILD. What greater sinnes could hap, then what be past?

NVNC. What mischiefes could be meant, more then were wrought?

No. Crime proceeds: those made but one degree.
 What mischiefes eark were done, terme sacred deedes
 Call nothing sinne, but what hath since insu'd.

A greater griefe requires your teares: Behold
 Theis fresh annoyes: your last mishaps be stale.

CONA. Tell on (my friend) suspend our mindes no more:
 Hath Arthur lost? Hath Mordred wonne the field?

NVNC. O: nothing lesse. Would Gods it were but so.
 Arthur hath wonne: but we haue lost the field.

GILD. The field? May all the Realme, and Brytaines boundes:
 How so? If Arthur wonne, what could we lose?

You speake in cloudes, and cast perplexed wordes.
 Unfolde at large: and sort out sorrowes out.

Then

NVNC, Then list a while: this instant shall burrowe
 Those acts, those warres, those hard events, that all
 The future age shall eu'r haue cause to curse.
 Now that the time drawe on, when both the Campes
 Should meet in Cornwell fieldes th' appointed place:
 The reckelless troupes, whom Fates forbad to line
 Till noone, or night, did storme and raine for warres.
 They swarmed about their Guydes, and clust'ring cast
 For signes to fight, and fierce with wyres fell,
 They onwarde hayld the hastning hotwyes of death.
 A direfull frenzie rose: ech man his owne,
 And publike Fates all he diele headlong flung.
 On Mordreds side were firtle thousande men,
 Some borrow'd potwyes, some Brytans bred at home.
 The Saxons, Irish, Normans, Pictes, and Scottes
 Were first in place, the Brytanes followed last.
 On Arthurs side there were as manie more.
 Islandians, Gothes, Norwegians, Albanes, Danes,
 Were foraine aides, which Arthur brought from Fraunce,
 A trustie troupe, and tryed at many a trench.
 That now the day was come, wherein our State
 For aye should fall, whenceforth men might inquire
 What Brytaine was: these warres thus neere bewainge.
 Nor could the Heauens no longer hide these harmes,
 But by prodigious signes portende our plagues.
 For lo: er both the Campes encountering coapt,
 The Skies and Poles opposed themselves with stormes.
 Both East, and West with tempestes darke were dim'd,
 And howyes of Hayle, and Rayne outragious pow'd.
 The Heauens were rent, ech side the lightnings flash't,
 And Cloudes with hideous clappes did thundering roare.
 The armies all agast did senselesse stand,
 Distrusting much, both force, and foes, and Fates.
 'Twas harde to say, which of the two appal'd
 Them most, the monstrous ayre, or too much feare,
 When Arthur spide his Souldiers thus amaz'd,
 And hope extinct, and deadly dreade drawne on:
 By mates (quoth he) the Gods doe skoyne the Skies,
 To see whose cause and courage traues their care.
 The Fates contende to worke some straunge event:
 And Fortune seeks by stormes in Heauens and Earth,
 What pagions she may play for my behoofe.
 Of whom she knowes, she then deserues not well,
 When lingring ought, she comes not at the first.
 Thus saide: reioycing at his dauntlesse minde,
 They all reuolde, and former feare recolyde.
 By that the light of Tican's troubled beames
 Had pearcing scattered downe the drownyng fogges,
 And greeted both the Campes with mutuall viewe:
 Their choller welles, whiles fell disposed mindes
 Bounced in their byasses, and fierce vncertaine stormes.

Then paleues wanne and sterne with chearelesse chaunge,
Possessing bleake their lippes and bloodlesse cheekes,
With troublous trembling shewes their death is nere.

When Mordred sawe the danger thus approacht,
And boystrous throngs of Warriors threaching blood;
His instant rutnes gaue a nodde at Fates,
And minde though prone to Mars, yet daunted pause.

The hart which promist eart a sure successe,
Now throbs in doubts; nor can his owne attempts,
Afforde him feare, nor Arthurs yeelde him hope.

This passion lasts not long, he soone recalls
His auncient guilt, and wouted rage returns.
He loathes delays, and scorcht with Scepters lust,
The time and place, wherein he oft had wisht
To hazarde all vpon extreamest Chaunce,
He offered spies, and spide pursues with spoe.

Then both the Armies mette with equall might,
This stird with wrath, that with desire to rule:
And equall promise was a spurre to both.

The Irish King whirle out a poynted Dart,
That lighting pearced deepe in Howels braines,
A poorelesse Prince and nere of Arthurs bloud.

Hereat the Aire with vpyre towde resoundes,
Which etes on mountains rough rebounding eares.
The Trumpets hoarece their trembling rines doe teare:
And thundring Drummes their dreadfull Larums ring.
The Standards broad are blotone, and Enignes spread,
And euery Nation bends his wouted warres.

Some nere their foes, some further off doe wound,
With dart, or sword, or shaft, or pike, or speare,
The weapons hide the Heauens: a night compolde
Of warrelke Engines ouershaues the field.

From euery side these fatall signes are sent:
And boystrous bangs with thumping thwacks fall thicke.

Had both these Camps beere of vsurping Kings,
Had euery man thereof a Mordred heene,

No fiercelier had they fought for all their Crownes.

The murders meanelesse wart, no art in fight,
Nor way to ward nor trie each others skill,

But thence the blade, and hence the bloud ensues.

CQNA. But what? Did Mordreds eyes indure this sight?

NVNC. They did. And he himselfe the spurre of fiends
And Gorgons all, least any part of his
Scapt free from guilt, endamde their mindes to wrath.

And, with a nature more, then Vertue yeelds,
He chearde them all, and at their backe with long

Outreached speare, stirde by each ingring hand.

All furie like frounst by with frantick frets.

He bids them leaue and shunne the meaneer soze,
He shewes the Kings, and Brytaines noblest vices.

GILD. He was not now to seeke what bloud to drawe

He knewe what iuice refresht his fainting Crotone.
 Too much of Arthurs hart. O had he wisd
 How great a vice such vertue was as then.
 In Ciuill warres, in rooting vp his Realme?
 O feantike fury, farre from Calures paffe.

NVNC. There fell Aschillus stout of Denmarke King,
 There valiant Gawin Arthurs Nephew deare,
 And late by Augels death made Albane King,
 By Mordreds hand heere lost both life and Crowne.

There Gilla wounded Cador Cornish Duke,
 In hope to winne the Dukedome for his merite.
 The Norway King, the Saxons Duke, and Picts,
 In twofull sorre fell grouelling to the ground.
 There Prince and Deafant both lay hurlede on heapes;
 Mars foyndeth on Arthurs mates; the Fates wart fierce,
 And jointly raine their race with Mordreds rage.

CONA. But with what toy (alas) shall he returne,

NVNC. That thus returnes, the happie for this haue?
 These eyes indure not long, for Mars rathles,
 And Fortune please he with Arthurs moderate peace,
 Returnes more full, and friendlier then her went.
 For when he saw the powers of Fates oppoide,
 And that the dreadfull houre thus hastened on;
 Purpleyed much in minde, at length resolues,
 That feare is couered best by daring most.

Then forth he pitcht; the Saxon Duke richstode,
 Whom with one stroke he headlesse sent to Hell.
 Not farre from thence he spide the Irish King,
 Whose life he toke as price of broken truce.

Then Cador foreward prest, and haplie mette
 The Traytor Gilla, worker of these warres,
 Of whom by death he toke his due reuenge.

The remnant then of both the Camps conurre,
 They Brytaines all, or most; few Forreines left.
 These wage the warres, and hence the deaths indue.
 For none, nor other side, that can destroy
 His foes so fast, as tis it selfe destroyed.

The brethren broach their bloud: the Sire his Sonnes,
 The Sonne againe would proue by too much Wrath,
 That he, whom thus he slew, was not his Sire.
 No bloud nor kinne can wage their trefull modes.
 No forreine for they seek, nor care to finde:
 The Brytaines bloud is fought on euery side.

A vaine discourse it were to paint at large
 The severall Fates, and foiles of either side.
 To tell what groines and sighes the parting Ghosts
 Sent forth; who dying bare the fellest breast;
 Who chaunged cheare at any Brytaines fall;
 Who of next stroke: who best bestowde his blade;
 Who ventred most: who stode: who fell: who failede;
 Wh' effect declares it all: thus far'd the field.

Of both these hoasts so huge and maine at first,
 There were not left on either side a score.
 For Sonne, and Sire to winne, and loose the Realme.
 The which when Mordred saw, and that his Sire
 Gaiust foes, and Fates themselves would winne the field.
 He sigh'd, and twirt despair and rage he cryed,
 Here (Arthur) here, and hence the Conquest comes:
 Whiles Mordred liues, the Crowne is yet vnwonne.
 Hereat the prince of prowesse much amaz'd,
 With chilling teares, and countenance cast on ground,
 Did groaning fetch a deepe and earnest sigh.
 Anone they fierce encountering both conar'd,
 With grieuoly looks, and faces like their Fates:
 But dispar minde, and inward modes unlike.
 The Sire with minde to safegard both, or e' once
 The Sonne to spoile the r'one, or hazard both.
 No feare, nor fellnes faile on either side:
 The wager lay on both their liues and bloods.
 At length when Mordred spyde his force to faint,
 And felt him selfe oppress with Arthurs strength,
 (O haplesse lad, a match vnneste for him)
 He loathes to liue in that afflicted state,
 And balliant with a forced Vertue, longs
 To die the death: in which perplexed minde,
 With greining teeth, and crabbed looks he cryes,
 I cannot winne: yet will I not be wounde.
 What should we him our Fates, or play with Mars,
 Or thus defraude the warres of both our blouds?
 Whereto doe we reuerne our selues? Or why
 Be we not fought ere this, amongst the dead?
 So many thousands murthered in our cause,
 Must we suruive, and neither winne nor loose?
 The Fates that will not smile on either side,
 May frowne on both: So saying forth he flings,
 And desperate runs on point of Arthurs Sword,
 (A Sword (alas) prepar'd for no such vse)
 Whercon engarde he glides, till nere approach,
 With dying hand he betwix his fathers head.
 So through his owne annoy, he noyes his Ledges
 And gaines by death access to daunt his Sire.
 There Mordred fell, but like a Prince he fell.
 And as a branch of great Pendarons grafte
 His life breaths out, his eyes forsake the Sunne,
 And fatall Cloudes inferre a lastingclipse.
 There Arthur staggering scant sustaine him selfe,
 There Cador found a deepe and deadly wound,
 There ceast the warres, and there was Brytaine lost.
 There lay the chosen youths of Mars, there lay
 The peerlesse Knights, Bellona's hauest traine.
 There lay the Diuours rare of Partail prauie,
 There lay the hope and y'anch of Bruce supplye.

There

There Fortune laid the prime of Bryaines pride,
There laid her pompe, all toples turne to ruide.

Exit.

The third scene.

Gildas, Conan.

GILD. Come cruell griefes, spare not to stretch our strengths,
Whiles bailefull breastes inuite our thumping fits.
Let euery sigh, that mounesfull passions worke,
Expresse what piteous plightes our mindes amaze.
This day supplants what no day can supply,
These handes haue wrought those wailles, that neuer age,
Nor all the hooode of Brute shall e'r repaire,
That future men may loy the surer rest,
These warres preuent their birth, and nip their spring.
That Nations earst the former age subduide
With howellie toples to Bryaines yoke, this day
Hath set at large, and back wardes turnde the Faces.
Henceforth the Kernes may safely tread their boggest
The Scots may now their inrodes olde renewe,
The Saxons well may now their former clabines,
And Danes without their danger drine vs out.
These warres found not the effect of wonted warres,
Nor doth their waight the like impression woofke:
There seuerall Fates annoybe but seuerall men,
Heere all the Realme and people finde one Fate,
That there did reache but to a Souldiers death,
Contains the death of all a Nation here.

These blades haue ginen this Isle a greater wounde,
Then tyme can heale. The fruite of ciuill warres:
A Kingdom's hand hath goard a Kingdom's heart,
When fame shall blaze these acts in latter yeares,
And tyme to come so many ages hence
Shall este report our toples and Bryish paynes:
Or when perhaps our Childrens Children reade,
Our woefull warres displaide with skilfull penner
They'l thinke they heere some soundes of future facts,
And not the ruines olde of pompe long past.
It will mouue their mindes to ruth, and frame a fresh
New hopes, and feares, and bolues, and many a wish,
And Archurs cause shall still be fauour'd most.

He was the ioy, and hope, and hap of all,
The Realmes defence, the sole delay of Fates,
He was our wall and forte, twice thirteene yeares
His shouldiers did the Brytaine state support.

Whiles yet he raign'd, no foren foes preuaide,
Nor once could hope to binde the Brytaine boundes:
But still both farre and nere were forc'd to flie,

They shall to vs, we to our selues were free.

But now, and henceforth aye, adue that hope,

Adue that pompe, that freedome, rule and all:

Let Saxons now, let Normans, Danes, and Scottes,

Enioye our meadowes, fieldes, and pleasant plaines:

Come, let vs flye to Mountaines, Cliffes and Rockes,

A nation hurt, and ne'r in case to heale.

Henceforth the waight of Fates thus false aside,

All rest secure from feare of greater foile:

Our leasure serues to thinke on former times,

And know what earth we were, who now are thus. *Exeunt.*

CHORVS.

1 O Brytaines prosperous state wert heauenlye powers

But halfe so willing to preserue thy peace,

As they are prone to plague thee for thy warres.

But thus (O Gods) yea, thus it likes you still.

When you decree to turne, and tourle the worlde,

To make our errors cause of your decrees.

All fretting fume, and burning war right wood,

All crye for swordes, and harmefull harness craue,

All rashly raue, whyles from our present rage,

You frame a cause of long foredeemed doome.

2 When Brytaine so desir'd her owne decate,

That eu'n her native woode would roote her vp:

Seamde it so huge a woofke, (O Heauens) for you

To tumble downe, and quite subuert her state,

Unlesse so many nations came in aide:

What thirst of spoile (O Fates?) In ciuill warres

Where you afraide to faint for want of blood?

But yet, O wretched state in Brytaines fond,

What needed they to stoope to Mordreds yoke,

O feare the man themselves so fearefull made:

Had they, but lynckt like friendes in Arthurs bandes,

And ioynde their force against the foxen foes:

These warres and ciuill shames had soone surceast,

And Mordred rest of rule had feard his Sire.

3 Would Gods these warres had drawne no other blood,

Then such as sproung from breakes of forreine foes:

So that the fountaine, fedde with chaungelesse course,

Had found no neerer vents for deauer tyme.

O, if the Fates so thirst for Brytish blood,

And long so deeply for our last decate:

O that the rest were sparde and safe reseru'd,

Both Saxons, Danes, and Normans most of all.

Heereof when ciuill warres haue twome vs out,

Must Brytaine stand, a borrow'd blood for due.

4 When prosperous haps, and long continuing blisse,

Haue past the ripenesse of their budding growth,

They fall and fowler like the mellow fruite,

Sur.

Surcharg'd with burden of their owne excess.
 So Fortune wearied with our often warres,
 Is forc'd to faint, and leaue vs to our fates.
 If men haue mindes prelagng ought their harmes,
 If euer he aile heart forsworne her woes:
 What Brytaine liues, so far remou'd from home,
 In any Ayre, or Dole, or Coast abroad?
 But that eien now through Natures sole instinct,
 He feelles the fatall sword imbue his breast,
 Where with his natue soyle for aye is slaine?
 What hopes, and happes lye wait'd in these warrest
 Who knowes the soyles he suffered in these fieldes?

The argument of the fift Act.

- 1 IN the first scene **Arthur** and **Cadoz** returned deadlie wounded
 and bewaild the misfortune of themselves and their Countie,
 and are likewise bewailed of the **Thoms**.
- 2 In the seconde scene the Ghoast of **Corlois** returneth reioy-
 cing at his reuendge, and wishing euer after a happier fate vnto
Brytaine, which done, he descendeth where he first rolc.

*The Argument and manner of the
 fift and last dumbe shewe.*

Sounding the Musicke, foure gentlemen all in blacke halfe armed, halfe vn-
 armed with blacke skarffes ouerthwart their shoulders should come vppon
 the stage. The first bearing alofte in the one hand on the truncheon of a
 speare an Helmet, an arming sword, a Gaunler, &c. representing the Tropheat
 in the other hand a Target depicted with a mans hart fore wounded & the blood
 gushing out, crowned with a Crowne imp. riall and a Lawrell garland, thus writ-
 ten in the toppe. *En totum quod superest*, signifyng the King of Norway whilich
 spent himselfe and all his power for **Arthur**, and of whom there was left nothing
 but his heart to inioy the conquest that ensued. The ieconde bearing in the one
 hand a silver vessell full of golde, pearles, and other iewels representing the *Spolia*
 in the other handle a Target with an Olephant and Dragon thereon fiercely com-
 bating, the Dragon vnder the Olephant and sucking by his extreine heate the
 blood from him is crushed in peeces with the fall of the Olephant, so as both die
 at last, this written aboue, *Victor, an Victor* representing the King of **Denmarke**,
 who fell through **Mordreds** wound, hating first with his souldiers destroyed the
 most of **Mordreds** armie. The third bearing in the one hand a Pyramis with a Law-
 rell wreath about it representing victorie. In the other hand a Target with this
 deuiſe: a man sleeping, a snake drawing neere to sting him, a Leazard preuenting
 the Snake by sight, the Leazard being deadlie wounded awaketh the man, who
 seeing the Leazard dying, pursues the Snake, and kills it, this written aboue, *Tibi
 morimur*. Signifying **Gawin** King of **Albany** slaine in **Arthurs** defence by **Mor-
 dred**, whom **Arthur** afterwarde slew. The fourth bearing in the one hand a
 broken pillar, at the toppe thereof the Crowne and scepter of the vanquishd
 King, both broken asunder, representing the conquest ouer vsurpation: in the o-
 ther hand a Target with two Cockes painted thereon, the one lying dead, the o-
 ther

ther with his winges broken, his eyes pecked out, and the blood euerie where gushing forth to the ground, he standing vpon the dead Cocke and crowing ouer him, with this embleme in the toppe, *Qua vici, peridi*, signifying *Cador* deadly wounded by *Gilla* whom he slewe. After these followed a King languishing in complee Harnesse blacke, brused & battered vnto him, besprinkled with blood, On his head a Lawrell garland, leaning on the shoulders of two Heraults in mourning gownes & hoods, th' on in *Mari* his coate of arms, the other in *Arthurs*, presenting *Arthur* victoriously but yet deadly wounded. there followed a page with a Target whereon was portraited a Pellican pecking her blood out of her brest to feede her young ones, through which wound she dieth, this writen in the toppe, *Qua soui, perit*, signifying *Arthurs* too much indulgence of *Mordred*, the cause of his death. All this represented the dismayed and vnfortunate victorie of *Arthur*, which is the matter of the Act ensuing.

THE FIFT ACT

and first Scene.

Arthur, Cador, Chorus.

ARTH. Come Cador, as our friendship was most firme
Throughout our age, so now let's linke as fast.

Thus did we liue in warres, thus let vs dye
In peace, and arme in arme pertake our Fates.
Our woundes, our griefe, our wish, our hap alike,
Our end so neere, all craue eche others helpe.

CADO. O King, beholde the fruite of all our Fame:
Lo here our Pompe consumed with our selues,
What all our age with all our warres had wonne,
Loe here one day hath lost it all at once.

Tell: so it likes the Heauens: thus Fortune gibes:
She hoyleth by to hurle the deeper doome.

CHOR. O sacred Prince: what sight is th'is we see?

Why haue the Fates re seru'd vs to these woes?

Our onely hope: the stay of all our Realme:

The pillar of our state: thus sore oppress?

O would the Gods had fauour'd vs so much:

That, as we liu'd partakers of your paines,

And likewise forde the fruit of your exploit:

So hauing thus bereft our Soueraignes blisse,

They had with more indifferent doome contoynd

The Subiects both, and Soueraignes bane in one.

It now (alas) ingendereth double griefe,

To rue your want, and to bewaile our woes.

ARTH. Rue not my Brytaines what my rage hath wrought,
But blame your King, that thus hath rent your Realme.

My meanelesse moodes haue made the Fates thus fell,

And too much anger wrought in me too much.

For had impatient ire indu'de abuse,

And

And prest'd where resistance threatned spoyle;
I mought haue liu'd in foyre coastes vnfolded,
And six score thousand men had bene vnmou'de.

But wrong incens'd wrath to take reuenge
Preferred Chaunce before a better choyse.

CHOR. 'Twas Mordreds wrong and to vntrist desertes
That iustly mou'de your highnesse to such wrath:

2 Your claime requir'd no lesse then those attempts:

ARTH. Your cause right good was prail'd, and prai'de for most.
I claim'd my Crowne, the cause of claime was good,

The meanes to claime it in such sorte was bad.

Dea: rather then my Realme and native soile

Should wounded fall, thus hyul'd with these warres:

I should haue left both Realme, and right, and all:

CADO. O, dur'd the death ordain'd by Mordreds oath.
And yet so farre as Mars coulde hide a meane,

You hailestle sought the safegard of them all.

Whereto the better cause, or badder Chaunce
Doo drawe, you still inclinde: preferring oft
The weaker side, sometimes for loue, sometimes
For right, (as Fortune swaile) your Sonne, your selfe.

So pittie spar'd, what reason sought to spoyle:

CHOR. Till all at length, with equall spoyle was spent,
(Could Gods your minde had felt no such remorse,

3 And that your foes had no such fauour founde.

So mought your friends haue had far friendlier Faces,

If Rebels for their due desert had dyde.

The wicked's death is safety to the iust.

To spare the Traitors, was to spoile the true.

Of force he hurtes the good, that helps the bad.

In that you sought your Countreys gaine, 'twas well:

In that you shunn'd not her losse, 'twas hard.

Good is the friend, that seeks to do vs good:

A mighty friend, that doth prevent our harmes.

ARTH. Well: so it was: it cannot be redress:

The greater is my greife, that sees it so.

My life (I feele) doth fade, and sorowes flowe,

The rather that my name is thus extinct.

In this respect, so Mordred did succede,

O, that my selfe had salne, and Mordred liu'd:

That hauing conquer'd all my foes but him,

I mought haue left you him, that conquer'd me.

O heauie wretched lot: to be the last

That failes, to viewe the buriall of my Realme.

Where each man else hath fealt his leuer all Face,

I onely pine oppress'd with all their Faces.

CHOR. Although your highnesse do lust time such greife,
As needes enforceth all your Realme to rue:

4 Yet since such ruth affordeth no releefe,

Let due discretion swage each curelesse fore,

And heare the harmes, that run without remesse.
The losse is ours, that loose so rare a Prince.

ARTH. You onely win, that see your foe here folde.
A caulelesse foe. When warres did call me hence
He was in yeares but young, in wit too olde.
As vertue shineth most in comliest twighes,
When inward gifts are deckt with outward grace:
So did his witte and feature feede that hope,
Which falsely trainde me to this wofull hap.

His minde trauell forned thus, I cannot chuse
But long to see what change his face sustaines.
My blood and kined doubled in his birth,
Inspires a mixt, and twice descending loue,
Which diuises my dying valnes to wish his death.
Unhealme his luckelesse head, set bare his face:
That face which earth y lea'd me and mine to much.

CHOR. See wortheft King the hope of all your Realme,
Had not his lust to rule prevented all.

ARTH. I see (alas) I see (hide, hide againe:
O spare mine eyes) a witness of my crimes:
A fearefull vision of my former guilt:
A dreadfull boior of a future doome:
A present gaule of minde. O happie they,
Whose spotlesse liues attaine a dreadlesse death.
And thou, O haplesse boye, O spight of Fates,
(What mought I terme thee, Nephew, Sonne, or both?)
Alas, how happie should we both haue bene,
If no ambitious thought had bent thy head.
Nor thou thus stru'de to reane thy fathers rule,
But staide thy tyme, and not forsaide vs both:

CADO. The hoar spurde youth that foste the forward steeves,
Whiles needes he would his fathers Chariot guide,
Neglecting what his Sire had said in charge,
The fires, which first he flung about the poles,
Himselfe at last most wofull wretch inflamde,
So to much loue to honer in the Heauens
Wade him to pate the price of rash attempts.

ARTH. What ruth, (ah,) rent the wofull fathers hart,
That sawe himselfe thus made a Sonnelesse Sire!
Well, since both Heauens and Hell conspir'd in one,
To make our endes a mirror to the world,
Both of incestious life, and wicked birth:
Would Gods the Fates that linckt our faultes alike,
Had also fram'de our minds of frendlier mouldes:
That, as our linage had approcht too neere,
So our affections had not warn'd to farre.

Then mought I ha'd enlarge the Brytaines praise,
In rearing efts the first triumphant Troy
And after thou succeeding mine attempts,
Haue spent thy courage in a iuster caule.
But I wou'd not be: Ambition grew to greater:

The breath-
lesse body of
Mordred in
Armour as he
fell is brought
vpon the
stage.

We could not loyne our mindes : our Fates we loynde:
And though thy blood, a way was made to mine.

CHOR. And must we needes (O worthiest Dares) forgoe,

2 By this vntimely Fate our greatest hope?
That in your ripest yeares and likepest time,
Your chiefest force should on this sodaine fail?

CHOR. Haue you throughout your youth made Brytaines pompe

3 A Soueraigne of so many Nations stout,
To th' end ere halfe your age vntimely death
Should leaue vs Subiect to our wonted foiles?

CHOR. See, see, our idle hopes, our brittle trust,

4 Our vaine desires, our ouer sickle state.
Which, though a while they sayle on quiet seas,
Per sinke in surge, e f they arriue to Rode.
O wofull warres, O Mordreds cursed pride,
That thus hath wrought both King, and Kingdomes woe.

CADO. Let plaints and mourning passe, let moanes a part.

They made much of themselues: Dea too too much
They lou'd to liue, that seeing all their Realme
Thus topsie turuey turnd, would grudge to dye.

ARTH. Dea sure : since thus (O Fates) your censure seemes,

That free from force of foireine foes, there rests,
That Mordred reape the glory of our deaths:

Wit so : dye on your doome, worke your decree:
We fearelesse hide what bane so e'r you bidde.

And though our ends thus hastened through your heau'n,

Abusly breake the course of great attempts:

Per goe we not inglorious to the ground:

Set with a part : we haue perfournd inough.

The Irish King and Nation wilbe we ramde:

The Scots and Picts, and Orcade Isles we warne:

The Danes and Gothes and Friseland men. with all

The Isles inferted nere those Seas, And next

The Germane King, and Saxons we subdude.

Not France, that could preuaile against our force,

Not lastly Rome, that rues her pride suppress.

Each foireine power is parcell of our praise,

No titles want to make our foes affraide.

This onely now I praye O Fortune erst

My faithfull friend, let it be soone forgot,

Not long in munde, nor mouth, where Arthur fell.

Dea : though I Conquerour die, and full of Fame:

Per let my death and parture rest obscure.

No graue I neede (O Fates) nor buriall rights,

Not stately hearse, nor tombe with haughtie toppe:

But let my Carcasse lurke : yea, let my death

Be ay vnknown, so that in euery Coast

I still be feard, and lookt for euery houre.

Exeunt, Arthur & Cador.

CHOR. Lo here the end that Fortune sends at last

1 To him, whom first she heard to highest happe.

AKITHON

The flatter'ing looke toherewith he long was led;
The smiling Fates, that oft had fedde his Fame:
The many warres and Conquests, which he gaind,
Are dash't at once: one day interres that soile,
Whereof so many yeares of poye were free.

CHOR. O willing world to magnifie man's state:

2 O most unwilling to maintaine the same.

Of all misfortunes and unhappy Fates,
Th' unhappy I comes, to haue beene hapte once.
Twis Arthur sole, that neuer found his toyes
Disturb'd with wor, nor woe's relieu'd with ioye.
In prosperous state all heauenly powres alight:
Now made a wretch, not one, that spares his spoile.

CHOR. Dea Fortunes selfe in this afflicted case,

3 Cracks a paine for long continued pompe.

She begeth now the blisse of wonted weale,
And beares him downe with waight of former Fame.
His prayles past be present shame: O tickle trust!
Whiles Fortune chops and chaungeth every Chaunce,
What certaine blisse can we enioy a hie.

CHOR. Unless, whiles yet our blisse endures, we die?

Dea: since before his last and outmost gaspe,

4 None can be deeme'd a happy man or blest,

Who dares commit him selfe to prosperous Fates,
Whose death preparte attends not hard at hand:
That silence death must once determine all,
His life may sooner flie, then Fortune floure.

The second scene.

Gorlois.

GOR L.

NOW Gorlois swage thy selfe. Hide hath his paye
Further his price: Adultrie his desert:

Treason his meede: Disloyaltie his doome;

Among hath his weake: and Guilt his guerdon beares:
Not one abuse erst offered by thy foes

But since most sternely punish't, is now purg'd.

Where thou didst fall, eu'n on the selfe same soile.

Pendragon, Arthur, Mordred, and their stocke,

Found all their foiles: not one hath scape reuenge;

Their line from first to last quite razed out.

Now rest content, and woike no further plagues:

Let future age be free from Gorlois Ghost.

Let Brytaine henceforth bath in endlesse weale.

Let Virgo come from Heauen, the glorious Starr:

The Zodiac's ioy: the Planets chiefe delight:

The hope of all the yeare: the eale of Skies:

The Aires reliefe, the comfort of the Earth.

That vertuous Virgo bringe for Brytaines blisse:

That

That piercelesse branch of Brute: that sweete remaine
Of Priam's state: that hope of springing Troy;
Which time to come, and many ages hence
Shall of all warres compound eternall peace.

Let her reduce the golden age againe,
Religion, ease, and wealth of former world.
Pea, let that Virgo come and Saturnes raigne,
And yeares oft ten times tolde expirde in peace.
A Rule, that else no Realme shall euer finde,
A Rule most rare, vnhheard, vnseene, vnread,
The sole example that the world affordes.

That (Brytaine) that Renowne, pea that is thine.
Be so: my wrath is wrought. Be furies blacke
And vglie shapes, that houle in holes beneath:
Thou Orcus darke, and deepe Auernas nooke,
With dusky dennes out gnaue in gulles belowe,
Receane your ghastly charge, Duke Gorlois choake:
Take room: I gladly thus reuengde returne.
And though your paine surpass. I greefe them tho:
He hates each other Heanen, that hauntheth Hell.

Descend.

EPILOGVS.

See heere by this the tickle trust of tyme:
The false affiance of each mortall force,
The waivering waight of Fates: the sickell trace,
That Fortune trips: the many mockes of life:
The cheerelesse change: the easellesse hynns and hopyles,
That man abides: the restlesse race he runnes.

But most of all, see heere the pœrelesse paines:
The lasting panges: the stinlelesse gœfes: the teares:
The sighes: the grones: the feares: the hopes: the hates:
The thoughts and cares, that Kingly pompe impartes.

What follies then bewitch thambitious mindes,
That thirst for Scepters pompe the well of woes:
Whereof (alas) should wretched man be proude,
Whose first conception is but Sinne, whose birth
But paine, whose life but toyle, and needes must dye?

See heere the store of great Iendragons hynde,
The to'ne quite dead, the to'her hastening on,
As men, the Sonne but greene, the Sire but ripe:
Yet both forestaloe ere halfe their race were run.
As Kinges, the mightiest Monarches in this age,
Yet both supprest and vanquisht by themselves.

Such is the brittle breath of mortall man,
Whiles humane Nature workes her dayly wraches:
Such be the crazed crests of glorious Crownes,
Whiles worldly powers like linden puffes do passe.
And yet for one that goes, another comes,

Some boine, some dead : So still the store indured,
So that both Fates and common care prou'de
That men must needes be boine, and some must rule.

Wherefore ye Princes, and Lordings lift aloft,
And whosde'r in Thrones that iudge your thalls:
Let not your Soueraingty heaue you to hye,
Nor their subiection presse them downe too lowe.
It is not pride, that can augment your power,
Nor lowlie lookes, that long can keepe them safe:

The Fates haue found a way, wherby ere long
The proude must leaue their hope, the meeke their feare,
Who ere receau'd such fauor from above,
That could assure one day vnto himselfe:
Him, whom the Boming found both stout and strong,
The Cneuing left all groueling on the ground.

This breath and heate wherewith mans life is fedde
Is but a flash, or flame, that shines a while,
And once extinct, is as it ne'r had bene.
Corruption hourly frets the bodtes frame,
Douth tends to age, and age to death by kinde.
Short is the race, prefigured is the end,
Swift is the tyme, wherein mans life doth run.
But by his deedes he extend renoume and fame,
That onely vertue workes, which neuer fades.

FINIS.

Thomas Hughes.

*Sat cyto, si sat bene: vrcunq;
Quod non dat spes, dat optio.*



¶ Heere after followe such
speeches as were penned by others, and pro-
nounced in stead of some of the former spee-
ches penned by Thomas Hughes.

A speech penned by William

Falbecke gentlewoman, one of the societie of Grayes-

Inne, and pronounced in stead of Gorlois

his first speeche penned by Thomas

Hughes, and set downe in the first

Scene of the first Acte.

A Lecto: thou that hast excluded mee
From felices Elysian, where the guiltlesse soules
Shoilde the scourge of Radamanthus see:
Let it be lawfull, (Oth I am remou'd
From blessed Islands, to this curst shoare,
This loathed earth where Archurs table standes,
With Dydure soule of Harpies fierce diskeind,)
The fates and hidden secrets to disclose
Of blacke Cocytus and of Acheron,
The foudes of death the lakes of burning soules,
Where Hellish frogges doe prophetic reuenge:
Where Tartars sprights with carefull heede attends
The dimall summons of Alectoes mouth,
My selfe by precept of Proserpina,
Commaunded was in presence to appeare,
Before the Synode of the damned sprightes,
In fearefull moode I did performe their heft,
And at my entrance in th' inchaunted snakes,
Which wayp themselus about the furies neckes,
Did hisse for ioy: and from the dreadfull benthe
The supreme furie thus assignde her charge.
Gorlois quoth she thou thither must ascend.
Whence through the rancour of malicious foes
Tearped with woundes thou didst descend to vs,
Make Brytaine now the marke of thy reuenge
On ruthlesse Brytaines and Pendragons race,
Disburse the treasure of thy Hellish plagues.
Let blood contend with blood, Father with Sonne,
Subiect with Prince, and let confusion raigne,
She therewithall entoynde the duskie cloudes
Which with their darkenesse turnde the earth to Hell,
Conuert to blood and poure downe streames of blood,
Cornetwell shall groane, and Archurs soule shall sigh,
Before the conscience of Gueneuora
The map of hell shall hang and fiendes shall rage:
And Gorlois ghost exacting punishment,

With dreames, with horrors and with deadly trauce
 Shall gripe their hearts: the vision of his corse
 Shall be to them, as was the terror vile
 Of flaming whippes to Agamemnons sonne.
 And when the Trumpet calles them from their rest
 Aurora shall with watry cheekes behold
 Their slaughtered bodies prostrate to her beames.
 And on the hanches of Cambala shall lye
 The bones of Arthur and of Arthurs knightes:
 Whose state is now triumphing on the seas.
 But shall bee welcom'd with a Tragedie.
 Thy native soyle shall be thy fatall gulfe
 Arthur: thy place of birth thy place of death.
 Mordred shall be the hammer of my hate
 To beate the bones of Cornish Lordes to dust.
 Pe rauening birdes vnder Celenoes power,
 I doe adiure you in Alectoes name.
 Follow the sworde of Mordred where he goes.
 Follow the sworde of Mordred for your foode.
 Aspyring Mordred, thou must also dye.
 And on the Altar of Proserpina
 Thy vitall blood vnto my Ghost shall fume.
 Heauen, Earth, and hell, concurre to plague the man.
 That is the plague of Heauen, Earth, and hell.
 Thou bids Alecto: I pursue my charge.
 Let thy Cerastæ whistle in mine eares,
 And let the belles of Pluto ring reuenge.

¶ One other speeche penned
 by the same gentleman, and pronouncd in steade
 of Gorlois his last speache penned by Tho-
 mas Hughes, and set downe in the se-
 cond Scene of the fift and last Act.

Death hath his conquest: hell hath had his wish.
 Gorlois his vowe: Alecto her desire.
 Sinne hath his pay: and blood is quit with blood.
 Reuenge in Trumphe beares the strugling hearts.
 Now Gorlois pearce the craggie Rockes of hell.
 Through chynckes wherof internall spites do glaunce,
 Returne this answer to the furles court.
 That Cornewell trembles with the thought of warre:
 And Tamers flood with drooping pace doth slowe,

For feare of touching Camballs bloodie streames,
 Brytaine remember, to: tte it on the walles,
 Which neyther tyme nor tyrannie may raze,
 That Rebelles, Traytors and conspirators,
 The seminarie of lewde Cateline,
 The Ballard Coouie of Italian birdes,
 Shall feele the flames of euer flaming fire,
 Which are not quenched with a sea of teares,
 And since in thee some glorious starre must shine,
 Whien many yeares and ages are expired
 Whose beames shall cleare the mist of discontent
 And make the dampe of Platoes pit retire,
 Sorlois will neuer fray the Brytans more,
 For Brytaine then becomes an Angels land,
 Both Duels and spites must yeelde to Angels power,
 Into the goddess of the Angels land,
 Haunt Brytaine haugt, of her renowned raigns,
 Whose face deterres the hayges of heil from thee:
 Whose vertues holde the plagues of heauen from thee,
 Whose presence makes the earth fruitful to thee:
 And with foresight of her thrice happie daies,
 Brytaine I leaue thee to an endlesse prais.

Besides these speeches there was also penned a **Chorus**
 for the first act, and an other for the second act, by Maister
Francis Flower, which were pronounced accor-
 dingly. The dumbe shewes were partly deuised by Mai-
 ster **Christopher Peluerton**, Maister **Francis**
Bacon, Maister **John Lancaster** and others,
 partly by the saide Maister **Flower**, who
 with Maister **Denrobocke** and
 the said Maister **Lancaster**
 directed these proces-
 dings at Court.

(.)



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Hughes, Thomas, fl. 1587.
Misfortunes of Arthur

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